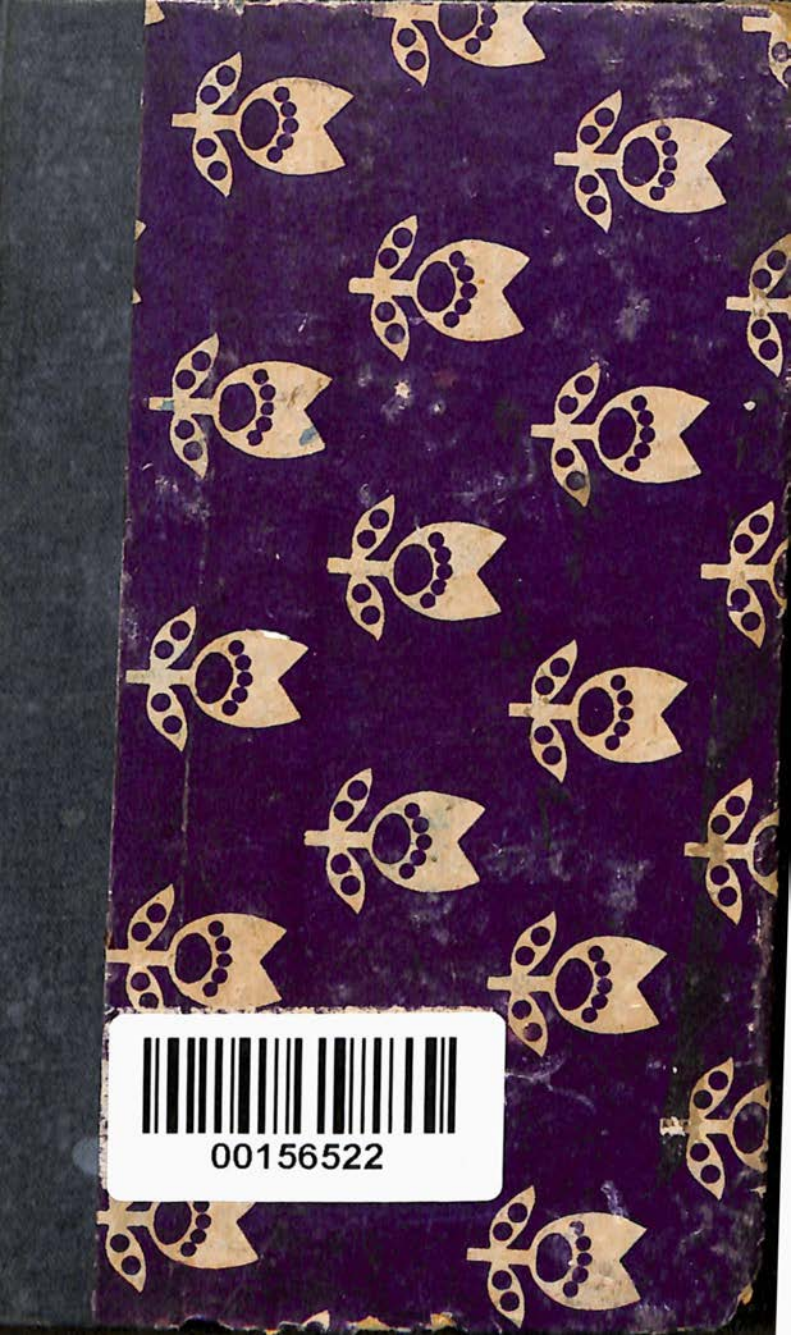
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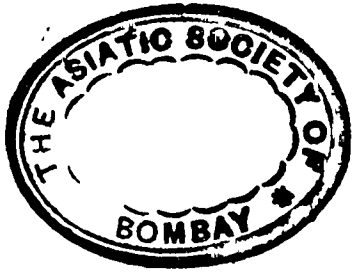

ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BOMBAY
Presented by:-
Mrs. S. Kolatkar
in memory of her
Father-Mr. Jehangir
Curshedji Katrak
Date.....

ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL. *Front.*

The Parting of Charles II. and James II.

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

JOHN DRYDEN.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY JOHN FRANKLIN.

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JOHN DRYDEN.

JOHN DRYDEN, the subject of this memoir, was born at the parsonage house of Aldwinkle All-Saints, on or about the 9th day of August, 1631; his father Erasmus was the third son of Sir Erasmus Dryden, baronet, of Canons-Ashby, in the county of Northampton. The village then belonged to the family of Exeter, as we are informed by the poet himself, in the postscript to his Virgil. That his family were puritans may readily be admitted; but that they were anabaptists, although confidently asserted by some of our author's political or poetical antagonists, appears altogether improbable. Notwithstanding, therefore, the sarcasm of the Duke of Buckingham, the register of Aldwinkle All-Saints parish, had it been in existence, would probably have been found to contain the record of our poet's baptism.

Dryden seems to have received the rudiments of his education at Tichmarsh, and was admitted a king's scholar at Westminster, under the tuition of the celebrated Dr. Bushby, for whom he ever afterwards entertained the most sincere veneration. Under so able a teacher, he made rapid progress in classical learning. The bent of the juvenile poet, even at this early period, distinguished itself. He translated the third satire of Persius, as a Thursday night's task, and executed many other exercises of the same nature, in English verse, none of which are now in existence. During the last year of his residence at Westminster, the death of Henry Lord Hastings,

a young nobleman of great learning, and much beloved, called forth no less than ninety-eight elegies, one of which was written by our poet, then about eighteen years old.

Dryden, having obtained a Westminster scholarship, was admitted to Trinity College, Cambridge, on the 11th May, 1650, his tutor being the reverend John Templer, M.A., a man of some learning, who wrote a Latin treatise in confutation of Hobbes, and a few theological tracts and single sermons.

Of his school performances we have only the Elegy on the death of Lord Hastings, which without his own testimony is enough to assure us that Cowley was his model; he has in it imitated Cowley's points of wit and quirks of epigram, with a similar contempt for the propriety of their application.

He took the degree of Bachelor, in January 1653–4, but neither became Master of Arts, nor a Fellow of the university, and certainly never retained for it much of that veneration usually paid by an English scholar to his Alma Mater.

In June 1654, the death of his father, Erasmus Dryden, proved a temporary interruption to our author's studies. He left the university, on this occasion, to take possession of his inheritance, consisting of two-thirds of a small estate near Blakesley, in Northamptonshire, worth, in all, about sixty pounds a-year. The other third part of this small property was bequeathed to his mother during her life, and the property reverted to the poet after her death in 1676. With this little patrimony our author returned to Cambridge, where he continued until the middle of the year 1657.

After leaving the university, our author entered the world, supported by friends, from whose character, principles, and situation, it might have been prophesied, with probability, that his success in life, and his literary reputation, would have been exactly the reverse of what they actually proved. Sir Gilbert Pickering was cousin-german to the poet, and also to his mother; thus standing related to Dryden in a double connexion. This gentleman was

a staunch puritan, and having set out as a reformer, ended by being a regicide, and an abettor of the tyranny of Cromwell. He was one of the judges of the unfortunate Charles; and though he did not sit in that bloody court upon the last and fatal day, yet he seems to have concurred in the most violent measures of the unconscientious men who did so. He had been one of the parliamentary counsellors of state, and hesitated not to be numbered among the godly and discreet persons who assisted Cromwell as a privy council. Moreover, he was lord chamberlain of the Protector's court, and received the honour of his mock peerage.

The patronage of such a person was more likely to have elevated Dryden to the temporal greatness and wealth acquired by the sequestrators and committee-men of that oppressive time, than to have aided him in attaining the summits of Parnassus.

In a youth entering life under the protection of such relations, who could have anticipated the future dramatist and poet-laureate, much less the advocate and martyr of prerogative and of the Stuart family, the convert and confessor of the Roman Catholic faith? In his after career, his early connexions with the puritans, and the principles of his kinsmen during the civil wars and usurpation, were often made subjects of reproach, to which he never seems to have deigned an answer.

The death of Cromwell was the first theme of our poet's muse. Averse as the puritans were to any poetry, save that of Hopkins, of Withers, or of Wisdom, they may be reasonably supposed to have had some sympathy with Dryden's sorrow upon the death of Oliver, even although it vented itself in the profane and unprofitable shape of an elegy.

With the return of the king, the fall of Dryden's political patrons was necessarily involved. Sir Gilbert Pickering, having been one of Charles's judges, was too happy to escape into obscurity, under an absolute disqualification for holding any office,—political, civil, or ecclesiastical. The influence of Sir John Dryden was ended at the same

time; and thus all these relations, under whose protection Dryden entered life, and by whose influence he was probably to have been aided in some path to wealth or eminence, became at once incapable of assisting him; and even connexion with them was rendered, by the change of times, disgraceful, if not dangerous. Yet it may be doubted whether Dryden felt this evil in its full extent. Sterne has said of a character, "that a blessing which closed his mouth, or a misfortune which opened it with a good grace, were nearly equal to him; nay, that sometimes the misfortune was the more acceptable of the two." It is possible, by a parity of reasoning, that Dryden may have felt himself rather relieved from, than deprived of, his fanatical patrons, under whose guidance he could never hope to have indulged in that career of literary pursuit, which the new order of things presented to the ambition of the youthful poet; at least, he lost no time in useless lamentation, but, now in his thirtieth year, proceeded to exert that poetical talent, which had heretofore been repressed by his own situation, and that of the country.

Dryden, left to his own exertions, hastened to testify his joyful acquiescence in the restoration of monarchy, by publishing "*Astræa Redux*," a poem which was probably distinguished among the innumerable congratulations poured forth upon the occasion; and he added to those which hailed the coronation, in 1661, the verses entitled "A Panegyric to his Sacred Majesty."

Science, as well as poetry, began to revive after the iron dominion of military fanaticism was ended; and Dryden, who through life was attached to experimental philosophy, speedily associated himself with those who took interest in its progress. He was chosen a member of the newly instituted Royal Society, 26th November, 1662; an honour which cemented his connexion with the most learned men of the time, and is an evidence of the respect in which he was already held. Most of these, and the discoveries by which they had distinguished themselves, Dryden took occasion to celebrate in his "Epistle to Dr. Walter Charleton," a learned physician, upon his treatise of Stone-

henge. Gilbart, Boyle, Harvey, and Ent, are mentioned with enthusiastic applause, as treading in the path pointed out by Bacon, who first broke the fetters of Aristotle, and taught the world to derive knowledge from experiment. In these elegant verses, the author divests himself of all the flippant extravagance of point and quibble, in which, complying with his age, he had hitherto indulged, though of late in a limited degree.

The victory gained by the Duke of York over the Dutch fleet on the 3d of June, 1665, and his Duchess's subsequent journey into the north, furnished Dryden with the subject of a few occasional verses, in which the style of Waller (who came forth with a poem on the same subject) is successfully imitated.

His next poem was of greater length and importance; it is an historical account of the events of the year 1666, under the title of "*Annus Mirabilis*," to which distinction the incidents which had occurred in that space gave it some title.

The "*Annus Mirabilis*" evinces a considerable portion of labour and attention; the lines and versification are highly polished, and the expression was probably carefully corrected. "Dryden," as Johnson remarks, "already exercised the superiority of his genius, by recommending his own performance, as written upon the plan of Virgil; and as no unsuccessful effort at producing those well-wrought images and descriptions, which create admiration, the proper object of heroic poetry." The "*Annus Mirabilis*" may indeed be regarded as one of Dryden's most elaborate pieces; although it is not written in his later, better, and most peculiar style of poetry. Mr. Hallam says, "Variety is its chief want, as dignity is its greatest excellence; but in spite of this defect, and of much bad taste, we doubt whether so continued a strain of poetry could at that time be found in the language. Waller's 'Panegyric,' at least, and Denham's 'Cooper's Hill,' the most celebrated poems of the age, are very inferior to it."

The Restoration brought with it a revival of the amusements of the stage, which under the Commonwealth had

been condemned as heathenish, and punished as appertaining especially to the favourers of royalty. Dryden, therefore, becoming a writer of plays, was a necessary consequence; for the theatres newly opened after so long silence, were resorted to with all the ardour inspired by novelty, and dramatic composition was the only line which promised something like an adequate reward to the professors of literature. Between the years 1661—4, Dryden produced "The Wild Gallant," "The Rival Ladies," and "The Indian Emperor." The latter play had most ample success. The dreadful fire of London, in 1666, however, put a stop to theatrical amusements, which were not permitted till the following Christmas.

Our author had assisted Sir Robert Howard in the composition of a rhyming play, called "The Indian Queen;" and their continued friendship introduced the poet to Sir Robert's father, the Earl of Berkshire. The consequence of this intimacy was, that Dryden gained the affections of Lady Elizabeth Howard, the Earl's eldest daughter; and, although the match was not altogether agreeable to the noble family, they were soon after married. Dryden's manners were amiable, his reputation as an author high, and his moral character unexceptionable. The noble Earl was most probably soon reconciled to the match, for Dryden seems to have resided with his father-in-law for some time, since it is from the Earl's seat at Charlton, in Wiltshire, that he dated the introduction to the "*Annus Mirabilis*," published at the close of the year 1667.

At this time Dryden was engaged in his "Essay on Dramatic Poesy," in which he assumes that the drama was the highest department of poetry; and endeavours to prove that rhyming or heroic tragedies are the most legitimate offspring of the drama. The subject is agitated in a dialogue between Lord Buckhurst, Sir Charles Sedley, Sir Robert Howard, and the author himself, under the feigned names of Eugenius, Lisideus, Crites, and Neander.

He next produced "The Maiden Queen," his version of "The Tempest," "Sir Martin Marr-all," and other dramas,

In 1670, he was, on the death of Davenant, appointed poet-laureate, and also to the office of royal historiographer, with a salary of 200*l.* paid quarterly, and the celebrated annual butt of canary.

Dryden continued to write for the stage, and between the age of thirty-five and sixty-three produced eight-and-twenty pieces, and still found time for other undertakings. It is not our purpose to further notice his dramas, but devote our observations to the contents of the present volume, and his translations from the Greek and Latin authors.

His play-writing and theatrical connexion had given rise to much criticism on his productions, by Settle, Rochester, and others, which were replied to with equal virulence: but the controversies in which Dryden had hitherto been engaged, were of a private complexion, arising out of literary disputes and rivalry. But the country was now deeply agitated by political faction; and so powerful an auxiliary was not permitted by his party to remain in a state of inactivity. The religion of the Duke of York rendered him obnoxious to a large proportion of the people, still agitated by the terrors of the Popish Plot. The Duke of Monmouth, handsome, young, brave, and courteous, had all the external requisites for a popular idol; and what he wanted in mental qualities was amply supplied by the Machiavel subtlety of Shaftesbury. The life of Charles was the only isthmus between these contending tides, "which, mounting, viewed each other from afar, and strove in vain to meet." It was already obvious, that the king's death was to be the signal of civil war. His situation was doubly embarrassing, because, in all probability, Monmouth, whose claims were both unjust in themselves, and highly derogatory to the authority of the crown, was personally amiable, and more beloved by Charles than was his inflexible and bigoted brother. But to consent to the bill for excluding the lawful heir from the crown, would have been at the same time putting himself in a state of pupilage for the rest of his reign, and evincing to his subjects, that they had nothing to

expect from attachment to his person, or defence of his interest. This was a sacrifice not to be thought of so long as the dreadful recollection of the wars in the preceding reign determined a large party to support the monarch, while he continued willing to accept of their assistance. Charles accordingly adopted a determined course; and, to the rage rather than confusion of his partisans, Monmouth was banished to Holland, from whence he boldly returned without the king's licence, and openly assumed the character of the leader of a party. Estranged from court, he made various progresses through the country, and employed every art which the genius of Shaftesbury could suggest, to stimulate the courage, and to increase the number, of his partisans. The press, that awful power, so often and so rashly misused, was not left idle. Numbers of the booksellers were distinguished as Protestant or fanatical publishers; and their shops teemed with the furious declamations of Ferguson, the inflammatory sermons of Hickeringill, the political disquisitions of Hunt, and the party plays and libellous poems of Settle and Shadwell. A host of rhymers, inferior even to those last named, attacked the king, the Duke of York, and the ministry, in songs and libels, which, however paltry, were read, sung, rehearsed, and applauded. It was time that some champion should appear in behalf of the crown, before the public should have been irrecoverably alienated by the incessant and slanderous clamour of its opponents. Dryden's place, talents, and mode of thinking, qualified him for this task. He was the poet-laureate and household servant of the king, thus tumultuously assailed. His vein of satire was keen, terse, and powerful, beyond any that has since been displayed. From the time of the Restoration, he had been a favourer of monarchy, perhaps more so, because the opinion divided him from his own family. If he had been for a time neglected, the smiles of a sovereign soon made his coldness forgotten; and if his narrow fortune was not increased, or even rendered stable, he had promises of provision, which inclined him to look to the future with hope, and endure the present with

patience. If he had shared in the discontent which for a time severed Mulgrave from the royal party, that cause ceased to operate when his patron was reconciled to the court, and received a share of the spoils of the disgraced Monmouth. If there wanted further impulse to induce Dryden, conscious of his strength, to mingle in an affray where it might be displayed to advantage, he had the stimulus of personal attachment and personal enmity, to sharpen his political animosity. Ormond, Halifax, and Hyde, Earl of Rochester, among the nobles, were his patrons; Lee and Southerne, among the poets, were his friends. These were partisans of royalty. The Duke of York, whom the "Spanish Friar" probably had offended, was conciliated by a prologue on his visiting the theatre at his return from Scotland, and, it is said, by the omission of certain peculiarly offensive passages, as soon as the play was reprinted. The opposite ranks contained Buckingham, author of the "Rehearsal;" Shadwell, with whom our poet now waged open war; and Settle, the insolence of whose rivalry was neither forgotten, nor duly avenged. The respect due to Monmouth was probably the only consideration to be overcome: but his character was to be handled with peculiar lenity; and his duchess, who, rather than himself, had patronised Dryden, was so dissatisfied with his politics, as well as the other irregularities of her husband, that there was no danger of her taking a gentle correction of his ambition as any affront to herself.

Thus stimulated by every motive, and withheld by none, Dryden composed, and, on the 17th November, 1681, published, the satire of "Absalom and Achitophel."

It appeared a very short time after Shaftesbury had been committed to the Tower, and only a few days before the grand jury were to take under consideration the bill preferred against him for high treason. Its sale was rapid beyond example; and even those who were most severely characterised, were compelled to acknowledge the beauty, if not the justice, of the satire. The character of Monmouth, an easy and gentle temper, inflamed beyond its usual pitch by ambition, and seduced by the arts of a wily

and interested associate, is touched with exquisite delicacy. The poet is as careful of the offending Absalom's fame, as the father in Scripture of the life of his rebel son. The fairer side of his character is industriously presented, and a veil drawn over all that was worthy of blame. But Shaftesbury pays the lenity with which Monmouth is dismissed. The traits of praise, and the tribute paid to that statesman's talents, are so qualified and artfully blended with censure, that they seem to render his faults even more conspicuous, and more hateful. In this skilful mixture of applause and blame lies the nicest art of satire. There must be an appearance of candour on the part of the poet, and just so much merit allowed, even to the object of his censure, as to make his picture natural. It is a child alone who fears the aggravated terrors of a Saracen's head; the painter, who would move the awe of an enlightened spectator, must delineate his tyrant with human features. It seems likely, that Dryden considered the portrait of Shaftesbury, in the first edition of "Absalom and Achitophel," as somewhat deficient in this respect; at least the second edition contains twelve additional lines, the principal tendency of which is to praise the ability and integrity with which Shaftesbury had discharged the office of Lord High Chancellor.

The success of this wonderful satire was so great, that the court had again recourse to the assistance of its author. Shaftesbury was now liberated from the Tower; for the grand jury, partly influenced by deficiency of proof, and partly by the principles of the Whig party, out of which the sheriffs had carefully selected them, refused to find the bill of high treason against him. This was a subject of unbounded triumph to his adherents, who celebrated his acquittal by the most public marks of rejoicing. Amongst others, a medal was struck, bearing the head and name of Shaftesbury, and on the reverse, a sun, obscured with a cloud, rising over the Tower and city of London, with the date of the refusal of the bill, (24th November, 1681,) and the motto, "LÆTAMUR." These medals, which his partisans wore ostentatiously at their bosoms, excited the general

indignation of the Tories; and the king himself is said to have suggested it as a theme for the satirical muse of Dryden, and to have rewarded his performance with a hundred broad pieces. To a poet of less fertility, the royal command to write again upon a character which, in a former satire, he had drawn with so much precision and felicity, might have been as embarrassing at least as honourable. But Dryden was inexhaustible; and easily discovered, that, though he had given the outline of Shaftesbury in "Absalom and Achitophel," the finished colouring might merit another canvass. About the 16th of March, 1681, he published, anonymously, "The Medal, a Satire against Sedition," with the apt motto,—

"Per Graium populos, mediæque per Elidis urbem
Ibat ovans; Divumque sibi poscebat honores."

It is said that it was Charles II. who gave Dryden the hint for writing his poem called "The Medal." One day, as the king was walking in the Mall, and talking with Dryden, he said, "If I was a poet, (and I think I am poor enough to be one,) I would write a poem on such a subject in the following manner;" and then gave him the plan for it. Dryden took the hint, carried the poem, as soon as it was written, to the king, and had a present of a hundred broad pieces for it.

In this satire, Shaftesbury's history; his frequent political apostasies; his licentious course of life, so contrary to the stern rigour of the fanatics, with whom he had associated; his arts in instigating the fury of the anti-monarchists; in fine, all political and moral bearings of his character,—are sounded, and exposed to contempt and reprobation, the beauty of the poetry adding grace to the severity of the satire. What impression these vigorous and well-aimed darts made upon Shaftesbury, who was so capable of estimating their sharpness and force, we have no means to ascertain; but long afterwards, his grandson, the author of the "Characteristics," speaks of Dryden and his works with a bitter affectation of contempt, offensive to every reader of judgment, and obviously formed on

prejudice against the man, rather than dislike to the poetry. It is said, that he felt more resentment on account of the character of imbecility adjudged to his father, in "Absalom and Achitophel," than for all the pungent satire, there and in the "Medal," bestowed upon his grandfather; an additional proof, how much more easy it is to bear those reflections which render ourselves or our friends hateful, than those by which they are only made ridiculous and contemptible.

A dispute with Shadwell, the dramatist, caused Dryden to compose "Mac Flecknoe, or a Satire on the True-Blue Protestant Poet, T. S., by the author of Absalom and Achitophel," which was published 4th October, 1682. Richard Flecknoe, from whom the piece takes its title, was so distinguished as a wretched poet, that his name had become almost proverbial. Shadwell is represented as the adopted son of this venerable monarch, who so long

> "In prose and verse was own'd without dispute,
> Through all the realms of Nonsense absolute."

The solemn inauguration of Shadwell as his successor in this drowsy kingdom, forms the plan of the poem; being the same which Pope afterwards adopted on a broader canvass for his "Dunciad." The vices and follies of Shadwell are not concealed, while the awkwardness of his pretensions to poetical fame are held up to the keenest ridicule. In an evil hour, leaving the composition of low comedy, in which he held an honourable station, he adventured upon the composition of operas and pastorals. On these the satirist falls without mercy; and ridicules, at the same time, his pretensions to copy Ben Jonson.

This unmerciful satire was sold off in a very short time; and it seems uncertain whether it was again published until 1684, when it appeared, with the author's name, in Tonson's first Miscellany. It would seem that Dryden did not at first avow it, though, as the title-page assigned it to the author of "Absalom and Achitophel," we cannot believe Shadwell's assertion, that he had denied it with oaths and imprecations. Dryden, however, omits this satire in the printed list of his plays and poems, along

with the Eulogy on Cromwell. But he was so far from disowning it, that in his "Essay on Satire," he quotes "Mac Flecknoe" as an instance given by himself of the Varronian satire.

"Absalom and Achitophel," and "The Medal," having been so successful, a second part to the first poem was resolved on, for the purpose of sketching the minor characters of the contending factions. Dryden, probably conceiving that he had already done his part, only revised this additional book, and contributed about two hundred lines. The body of the poem was written by Nahum Tate, one of those second-rate bards, who, by dint of pleonasm and expletive, can find smooth lines if any one will supply them with ideas. The Second Part of "Absalom and Achitophel" is, however, much beyond his usual pitch, and exhibits considerable marks of a careful revision by Dryden, especially in the satirical passages; for the eulogy on the Tory chiefs is in the flat and feeble strain of Tate himself, as is obvious when it is compared with the description of the Green-Dragon Club, the character of Corah, and other passages exhibiting marks of Dryden's hand.

But if the Second Part of "Absalom and Achitophel" fell below the First in its general tone, the celebrated passage inserted by Dryden possessed even a double portion of the original spirit. The victims whom he selected out of the partisans of Monmouth and Shaftesbury for his own particular severity, were Robert Ferguson, afterwards well known by the name of the Plotter; Forbes; Johnson, author of the parallel between James, Duke of York, and Julian the Apostate; but, above all, Settle and Shadwell, whom, under the names of Doeg and Og, he has depicted in the liveliest colours his poignant satire could afford.

The Second Part of "Absalom and Achitophel" was followed by the "*Religio Laici*," a poem which Dryden published in the same month of November, 1682. Its tendency, although of a political nature, is so different from that of the satires, that it will be most properly considered when we can place it in contrast to the "Hind and Panther."

Dryden, by the king's express command, was engaged in a work which may be considered as a sort of illustration of the doctrines laid down in the "Vindication of the Duke of Guise." It was the translation of Maimbourg's "History of the League," expressly composed to draw a parallel between the Huguenots of France and the Leaguers, as both equal enemies of the monarchy. This comparison was easily transferred to the sectaries of England, and the association proposed by Shaftesbury. The work was published with unusual solemnity of title-page and frontispiece; the former declaring, that the translation was made by his majesty's command; the latter representing Charles on his throne, surrounded by emblems expressive of hereditary and indefeasible right.

This translation was to be the last service which Dryden was to render his good-humoured, selfish, and thoughtless patron. While the laureate was preparing for the stage the opera of "Albion and Albanius," intended to solemnize the triumph of Charles over the Whigs, or, as the author expressed it, the double restoration of his sacred majesty, the king died of an apoplexy, upon the 6th February, 1684-5.

The accession of James II. to the British throne excited new hopes in all orders of men. On the accession of a new prince, the loyal looked to rewards, the rebellious to amnesty. The Catholics exulted in beholding one of their persuasion attain the crown after an interval of two centuries; the Church of England expected the fruits of her unlimited devotion to the royal line; even the sectaries might hope indulgence from a prince, whose religion deviated from that established by law as widely as their own. All, therefore, hastened, in sugared addresses, to lament the sun which had set, and hail the beams of that which had arisen. Dryden, among other expectants, chose the more honourable of these themes; and in the "*Threnōdia Augustalis*," at once paid a tribute to the memory of the deceased monarch, and decently solicited the attention of his successor.

We have now reached a remarkable incident in our

author's life, his conversion to the faith of Rome, which took place shortly after the accession of James II. The principal clue to the progress of his religious principle is to be found in the poet's own lines in "The Hind and Panther," and may, by a very simple commentary, be applied to the state of his religious opinions at different periods of his life. The appearance of the polemical poem of "The Hind and Panther" excited a far greater clamour against the author than the publication of "Absalom and Achitophel." It was printed at the same time both at London and Edinburgh, and went rapidly through three editions. In 1687 he produced, for the festival, the "Ode to Cecilia." An event deemed of the utmost and most beneficial importance to the family of Stuart, but which, according to their usual ill-fortune, helped to precipitate their ruin, next called forth the public gratulation of the poet-laureate. This was the birth of that "son of prayers," prophesied in the dedication to Xavier, whom the English, with obstinate incredulity, long chose to consider as an impostor, grafted upon the royal line, to the prejudice of the Protestant succession. Dryden's "*Britannia Rediviva*" hailed, with the enthusiasm of a Catholic and a poet, the very event, which, removing all hope of succession in the course of nature, precipitated the measures of the Prince of Orange, exhausted the patience of the exasperated people, and led them violently to extirpate a hated dynasty, which seemed likely to be protracted by a new reign.

After the Revolution, Dryden began to lay the foundation for a new structure of fame and popularity, in the tragedy of "Don Sebastian," which is justly considered as the *chef-d'œuvre* of his plays; and, thus encouraged by a revival of his popularity, ventured to bring forward the opera of "King Arthur," and to it affixed a beautiful dedication to the Marquis of Halifax. The music to the opera was composed by Purcel. The piece was eminently successful. Shortly after, he translated five of the Satires of Juvenal, and the whole of Persius. For Tonson's Miscellany he executed translations of Ovid and Homer. The success of these taught the publisher the value placed by the public

on Dryden's translations, who accordingly agreed with him for the translation of Virgil, for which Dryden received above 1,200*l.* Virgil was just finished, when Dryden distinguished himself by the immortal ode commonly called "Alexander's Feast."

Not long after, our author engaged himself in the composition of those imitations of Boccaccio and Chaucer, which have since been called the "Fables." One of these, the "Character of a good Parson," he undertook at the instigation of Mr. Pepys, the founder of the library in Magdalen College, Cambridge. The "Fables" were dedicated to the last Duke of Ormond, whose father and grandfather had both been friends and patrons of Dryden's earlier essays; and to them was also affixed the introductory verses to the beautiful Duchess: this incense was acknowledged by a donation of 500*l.*

Dryden had for some years suffered both by gout and gravel, and latterly the erysipelas seized one of his legs. To a shattered frame and corpulent habits, the most trifling accident is often fatal: a slight inflammation in one of his toes became, from neglect, a gangrene; to prevent mortification the surgeon proposed to amputate the limb, but Dryden refused the chance, and died, on the 1st of May, 1700. He was sensible till nearly the last, and died in the Roman Catholic faith, with submission and entire resignation to the Divine will, "taking of his friends so tender and obliging a farewell as none but he himself could have expressed."

His family were preparing to bury him in a manner becoming their limited circumstances, when several men of quality made a subscription for a public funeral. The body was removed to Physicians' Hall, where it was embalmed, and lay in state till the 13th of May; on that day the celebrated Dr. Garth pronounced a Latin oration over the remains of his deceased friend, which were then, in state, conveyed to Westminster Abbey, and deposited between the graves of Chaucer and Cowley.

UPON THE DEATH OF LORD HASTINGS.

MUST noble Hastings immaturely die,
The honour of his ancient family,
Beauty and learning thus together meet,
To bring a winding for a wedding sheet?
Must virtue prove death's harbinger? must she,
With him expiring, feel mortality?
Is death, sin's wages, grace's now? shall art
Make us more learned, only to depart?
If merit be disease; if virtue death;
To be good, not to be; who'd then bequeath
Himself to discipline? who'd not esteem
Labour a crime? study self-murther deem?
Our noble youth now have pretence to be
Dunces securely, ignorant healthfully
Rare linguist, whose worth speaks itself, whose praise,
Though not his own, all tongues besides do raise:
Than whom great Alexander may seem less;
Who conquer'd men, but not their languages.
In his mouth nations spake; his tongue might be
Interpreter to Greece, France, Italy.
His native soil was the four parts o' the earth;
All Europe was too narrow for his birth.
A young apostle; and, with reverence may
I speak it, inspired with gift of tongues, as they.
Nature gave him, a child, what men in vain
Oft strive, by art though further'd, to obtain.
His body was an orb, his sublime soul
Did move on virtue's and on learning's pole:
Whose regular motions better to our view,
Than Archimedes' sphere, the heavens did shew.
Graces and virtues, languages and arts,
Beauty and learning, fill'd up all the parts.
Heaven's gifts, which do like falling stars appear
Scatter'd in others; all, as in their sphere,
Were fix'd, conglobate in his soul; and thence
Shone through his body, with sweet influence;

Letting their glories so on each limb fall,
The whole frame render'd was celestial.
Come, learned Ptolemy, and trial make,
If thou this hero's altitude canst take:
But that transcends thy skill; thrice happy all,
Could we but prove thus astronomical.
Lived Tycho now, struck with this ray, which shone
More bright in the morn, than others beam at noon,
He'd take his astrolabe, and seek out here
What new star 'twas did gild our hemisphere.
Replenish'd then with such rare gifts as these,
Where was room left for such a foul disease?
The nation's sin hath drawn that veil, which shrouds
Our day-spring in so sad benighting clouds;
Heaven would no longer trust its pledge; but thus
Recall'd it; rapt its Ganymede from us.
Was there no milder way but the small-pox,
The very filthiness of Pandora's box?
So many spots, like næves on Venus' soil,
One jewel set off with so many a foil;
Blisters with pride swell'd, which through 's flesh did sprout
Like rose-buds, stuck in the lily skin about.
Each little pimple had a tear in it,
To wail the fault its rising did commit:
Which, rebel-like, with its own lord at strife,
Thus made an insurrection 'gainst his life.
Or were these gems sent to adorn his skin,
The cabinet of a richer soul within?
No comet need foretel his change drew on,
Whose corpse might seem a constellation.
O! had he died of old, how great a strife
Had been, who from his death should draw their life?
Who should, by one rich draught, become whate'er
Seneca, Cato, Numa, Cæsar, were?
Learn'd, virtuous, pious, great; and have by this
An universal metempsychosis.
Must all these aged fires in one funeral
Expire? all die in one so young, so small?
Who, had he lived his life out, his great fame
Had swoll'n 'bove any Greek or Roman name.
But hasty winter, with one blast, hath brought
The hopes of autumn, summer, spring, to nought.
Thus fades the oak in the sprig, in the blade the corn;
Thus without young, this Phœnix dies, new-born.

Must then old three-legg'd grey-beards with their gout.
Catarrhs, rheums, aches, live three ages out?
Time's offals, only fit for the hospital!
Or to hang antiquaries' rooms withal!
Must drunkards, lechers, spent with sinning, live
With such helps as broths, possets, physic give?
None live, but such as should die? shall we meet
With none but ghostly fathers in the street?
Grief makes me rail; sorrow will force its way;
And showers of tears tempestuous sighs best lay.
The tongue may fail; but overflowing eyes
Will weep out lasting streams of elegies.
But thou, O virgin-widow, left alone,
Now thy beloved, heaven-ravish'd spouse is gone,
Whose skilful sire in vain strove to apply
Med'cines, when thy balm was no remedy,
With greater than Platonic love, O wed
His soul, though not his body, to thy bed:
Let that make thee a mother; bring thou forth
The ideas of his virtue, knowledge, worth;
Transcribe the original in new copies; give
Hastings of the better part: so shall he live
In his nobler half; and the great grandsire be
Of an heroic divine progeny:
An issue, which to eternity shall last,
Yet but the irradiations which he cast.
Erect no mausoleums: for his best
Monument is his spouse's marble breast.

TO HIS FRIEND THE AUTHOR, JOHN HODDESDON,

ON HIS DIVINE EPIGRAMS.

Thou hast inspired me with thy soul, and I
Who ne'er before could ken of Poetry,
Am grown so good proficient, I can lend
A line in commendation of my friend.
Yet 'tis but of the second hand; if ought
There be in this, 'tis from thy fancy brought.
Good thief, who dar'st, Prometheus-like, aspire,
And fill thy poems with celestial fire:

Enliven'd by these sparks divine, their rays
Add a bright lustre to thy crown of bays.
Young eaglet, who thy nest thus soon forsook,
So lofty and divine a course hast took
As all admire, before the down begin
To peep, as yet, upon thy smoother chin;
And, making heaven thy aim, hast had the grace
To look the sun of righteousness i' th' face.
What may we hope, if thou go'st on thus fast,
Scriptures at first; enthusiasms at last!
Thou hast commenced, betimes, a saint; go on,
Mingling diviner streams with Helicon;
That they who view what Epigrams here be,
May learn to make like, in just praise of thee.
Reader, I've done, nor longer will withhold
Thy greedy eyes; looking on this pure gold
Thou 'lt know adulterate copper, which, like this,
Will only serve to be a foil to his.

HEROIC STANZAS ON THE DEATH OF OLIVER CROMWELL.

WRITTEN AFTER HIS FUNERAL.

And now 'tis time; for their officious haste,
Who would before have borne him to the sky,
Like eager Romans, ere all rites were past,
Did let too soon the sacred eagle fly.

Though our best notes are treason to his fame,
Join'd with the loud applause of public voice;
Since Heaven, what praise we offer to his name,
Hath render'd too authentic by its choice.

Though in his praise no arts can liberal be,
Since they, whose muses have the highest flown,
Add not to his immortal memory,
But do an act of friendship to their own:

Yet 'tis our duty, and our interest too,
Such monuments as we can build to raise;
Lest all the world prevent what we should do,
And claim a title in him by their praise.

How shall I then begin, or where conclude,
To draw a fame so truly circular?
For in a round what order can be show'd,
Where all the parts so equal perfect are?

His grandeur he derived from Heaven alone;
For he was great, ere fortune made him so:
And wars, like mists that rise against the sun,
Made him but greater seem, not greater grow.

No borrow'd bays his temples did adorn,
But to our crown he did fresh jewels bring;
Nor was his virtue poison'd soon as born,
With the too early thoughts of being king.

Fortune—that easy mistress to the young,
But to her ancient servants coy and hard—
Him at that age her favourites rank'd among,
When she her best-loved Pompey did discard.

He, private, mark'd the fault of others' sway
And set as sea-marks for himself to shun:
Not like rash monarchs, who their youth betray
By acts their age too late would wish undone.

And yet dominion was not his design;
We owe that blessing, not to him, but Heaven,
Which to fair acts unsought rewards did join;
Rewards, that less to him than us were given.

Our former chiefs, like sticklers of the war,
First sought to inflame the parties, then to poise:
The quarrel loved, but did the cause abhor;
And did not strike to hurt, but make a noise.

War, our consumption, was their gainful trade:
We inward bled, whilst they prolong'd our pain,
He fought to end our fighting, and essay'd
To staunch the blood by breathing of the vein.

Swift and resistless through the land he past,
Like that bold Greek who did the East subdue,
And made to battles such heroic haste,
As if on wings of victory he flew.

He fought secure of fortune as of fame:
Still, by new maps, the island might be shown,
Of conquests, which he strew'd where'er he came,
Thick as the galaxy with stars is sown.

His palms, though under weights they did not stand,
Still thrived; no winter could his laurels fade:
Heaven in his portrait show'd a workman's hand,
And drew it perfect, yet without a shade.

Peace was the prize of all his toil and care,
Which war had banish'd, and did now restore:
Bologna's walls thus mounted in the air,
To seat themselves more surely than before.

Her safety, rescued Ireland to him owes;
And treacherous Scotland to no interest true,
Yet blest that fate which did his arms dispose
Her land to civilise, as to subdue.

Nor was he like those stars which only shine,
When to pale mariners they storms portend:
He had his calmer influence, and his mien
Did love and majesty together blend.

'Tis true, his countenance did imprint an awe;
And naturally all souls to his did bow,
As wands of divination downward draw,
And point to beds where sovereign gold doth grow.

When past all offerings to Foretrian Jove,
He Mars deposed, and arms to gowns made yield;
Successful councils did him soon approve
As fit for close intrigues, as open field.

To suppliant Holland he vouchsafed a peace,
Our once bold rival of the British main,
Now tamely glad her unjust claim to cease,
And buy our friendship with her idol—gain.

Fame of the asserted sea through Europe blown,
Made France and Spain ambitious of his love;
Each knew that side must conquer he would own;
And for him fiercely, as for empire, strove.

No sooner was the Frenchman's cause embraced,
Than the light Monsieur the grave Don outweigh'd:
His fortune turn'd the scale where'or 'twas cast;
Though Indian mines were in the other laid.

When absent, yet we conquer'd in his right:
For though some meaner artist's skill were shown
In mingling colours, or in placing light;
Yet still the fair designment was his own.

CROMWELL IN COUNCIL.

"Successful councils did him soon approve,
As fit for close intrigues as open field."

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For from all tempers he could service draw;
The worth of each, with its alloy, he knew,
And, as the confident of Nature, saw
How she complexions did divide and brew.

Or he their single virtues did survey,
By intuition, in his own large breast,
Where all the rich ideas of them lay,
That were the rule and measure to the rest.

When such heroic virtue heaven sets out,
The stars, like commons, sullenly obey;
Because it drains them when it comes about,
And therefore is a tax they seldom pay.

From this high spring our foreign conquests flow,
Which yet more glorious triumphs do portend;
Since their commencement to his arms they owe,
If springs as high as fountains may ascend.

He made us free-men of the continent,
Whom Nature did like captives treat before;
To nobler preys the English lion sent,
And taught him first in Belgian walks to roar.

That old unquestion'd pirate of the land,
Proud Rome, with dread the fate of Dunkirk heard;
And trembling wish'd behind more Alps to stand,
Although an Alexander were her guard.

By his command we boldly cross'd the line,
And bravely fought where southern stars arise;
We traced the far-fetch'd gold unto the mine,
And that which bribed our fathers made our prize.

Such was our prince; yet own'd a soul above
The highest acts it could produce to show:
Thus poor mechanic arts in public move,
Whilst the deep secrets beyond practice go.

Nor died he when his ebbing fame went less,
But when fresh laurels courted him to live:
He seem'd but to prevent some new success,
As if above what triumphs earth could give.

His latest victories still thickest came,
As near the centre, motion doth increase;
Till he, press'd down by his own weighty name,
Did, like the vestal, under spoils decease.

But first the ocean as a tribute sent
The giant prince of all her watery herd;
And the isle, when her protecting genius went,
Upon his obsequies loud sighs conferr'd.

No civil broils have since his death arose,
But faction now by habit does obey;
And wars have that respect for his repose,
As winds for halcyons when they breed at sea.

His ashes in a peaceful urn shall rest,
His name a great example stands, to show
How strangely high endeavours may be blest,
Where piety and valour jointly go.

ASTRÆA REDUX.

A POEM ON THE HAPPY RESTORATION AND RETURN OF HIS SACRED MAJESTY CHARLES II. 1660.

Now with a general peace the world was blest,
While ours, a world divided from the rest,
A dreadful quiet felt, and worser far
Than arms, a sullen interval of war:
Thus when black clouds draw down the labouring skies,
Ere yet abroad the winged thunder flies,
An horrid stillness first invades the ear,
And in that silence we the tempest fear.
The ambitious Swede, like restless billows toss'd,
On this hand gaining what on that he lost,
Though in his life he blood and ruin breathed,
To his now guideless kingdom peace bequeath'd.
And Heaven, that seem'd regardless of our fate,
For France and Spain did miracles create;
Such mortal quarrels to compose in peace,
As nature bred, and interest did increase.
We sigh'd to hear the fair Iberian bride
Must grow a lily to the lily's side,
Whilst our cross stars denied us Charles's bed,
Whom our first flames and virgin love did wed.
For his long absence Church and State did groan;
Madness the pulpit, faction seized the throne:
Experienced age in deep despair was lost,
To see the rebel thrive, the loyal cross'd:

Youth, that with joys had unacquainted been,
Envied gray hairs that once good days had seen:
We thought our sires, not with their own content,
Had, ere we came to age, our portion spent.
Nor could our nobles hope their bold attempt,
Who ruin'd crowns would coronets exempt.
For when, by their designing leaders taught
To strike at power which for themselves they sought,
The vulgar, gull'd into rebellion, arm'd;
Their blood to action by the prize was warm'd.
The sacred purple then and scarlet gown,
Like sanguine dye, to elephants was shown.
Thus, when the bold Typhœus scaled the sky,
And forced great Jove from his own heaven to fly,
(What king, what crown from treason's reach is free,
If Jove and Heaven can violated be?)
The lesser gods, that shared his prosperous state,
All suffer'd in the exiled Thunderer's fate.
The rabble now such freedom did enjoy,
As winds at sea, that use it to destroy:
Blind as the Cyclop, and as wild as he,
They own'd a lawless savage liberty,
Like that our painted ancestors so prized,
Ere empire's arts their breasts had civilised.
How great were then our Charles's woes, who thus
Was forced to suffer for himself and us!
He, toss'd by fate, and hurried up and down,
Heir to his father's sorrows, with his crown,
Could taste no sweets of youth's desired age;
But found his life too true a pilgrimage.
Unconquered yet in that forlorn estate,
His manly courage overcame his fate.
His wounds he took, like Romans, on his breast,
Which, by his virtue, were with laurels dress'd.
As souls reach heaven while yet in bodies pent,
So did he live above his banishment.
That sun, which we beheld with cozen'd eyes
Within the water, moved along the skies.
How easy 'tis, when destiny proves kind,
With full-spread sails to run before the wind!
But those that 'gainst stiff gales laveering go,
Must be at once resolved, and skilful too.
He would not, like soft Otho, hope prevent,
But stay'd and suffer'd fortune to repent.

These virtues Galba in a stranger sought,
And Piso to adopted empire brought.
How shall I then my doubtful thoughts express,
That must his sufferings both regret and bless?
For when his early valour Heaven had cross'd;
And all at Worcester but the honour lost;
Forced into exile from his rightful throne,
He made all countries where he came his own;
And, viewing monarchs' secret arts of sway,
A royal factor for his kingdoms lay.
Thus banish'd David spent abroad his time,
When to be God's anointed was his crime;
And, when restored, made his proud neighbours rue
Those choice remarks he from his travels drew.
Nor is he only by affliction shown
To conquer others' realms, but rule his own:
Recovering hardly what he lost before,
His right endears it much; his purchase more.
Inured to suffer ere he came to reign,
No rash procedure will his actions stain:
To business ripen'd by digestive thought,
His future rule is into method brought:
As they who first proportion understand,
With easy practice reach a master's hand.
Well might the ancient poets then confer
On Night the honour'd name of Counsellor,
Since struck with rays of prosperous fortune blind,
We light alone in dark afflictions find.
In such adversities to sceptres train'd,
The name of Great his famous grandsire gain'd;
Who yet a king alone in name and right,
With hunger, cold, and angry Jove did fight;
Shock'd by a Covenanting League's vast powers,
As holy and as catholic as ours:
Till fortune's fruitless spite had made it known,
Her blows not shook but riveted his throne.
  Some lazy ages, lost in sleep and ease,
No action leave to busy chronicles:
Such, whose supine felicity but makes
In story chasms, in epocha mistakes;
O'er whom Time gently shakes his wings of down,
Till with his silent sickle they are mown.
Such is not Charles's too too active age,
Which, govern'd by the wild distemper'd rage

Of some black star infecting all the skies,
Made him at his own cost like Adam wise.
Tremble, ye nations, who secure before,
Laugh'd at those arms that 'gainst ourselves we bore,
Roused by the lash of his own stubborn tail,
Our lion now will foreign foes assail.
With alga who the sacred altar strews?
To all the sea-gods Charles an offering owes:
A bull to thee, Portunus, shall be slain;
A lamb to you, ye tempests of the main:
For those loud storms that did against him roar,
Have cast his shipwreck'd vessel on the shore.
Yet as wise artists mix their colour so,
That by degrees they from each other go:
Black steals unheeded from the neighb'ring white,
Without offending the well-cozen'd sight:
So on us stole our blessed change; while we
The effect did feel, but scarce the manner see.
Frosts that constrain the ground, and birth deny
To flowers that in its womb expecting lie,
Do seldom their usurping power withdraw,
But raging floods pursue their hasty thaw.
Our thaw was mild, the cold not chased away,
But lost in kindly heat of lengthen'd day.
Heaven would no bargain for its blessings drive,
But what we could not pay for, freely give.
The Prince of Peace would like himself confer
A gift unhoped, without the price of war:
Yet, as he knew his blessing's worth, took care
That we should know it by repeated prayer;
Which storm'd the skies, and ravish'd Charles from thence,
As heaven itself is took by violence.
Booth's forward valour only served to show,
He durst that duty pay we all did owe:
The attempt was fair; but heaven's prefix'd hour
Not come: so like the watchful traveller
That by the moon's mistaken light did rise,
Lay down again, and closed his weary eyes.
'Twas Monk, whom Providence design'd to loose
Those real bonds false freedom did impose.
The blessed saints that watch'd this turning scene,
Did from their stars with joyful wonder lean,
To see small clues draw vastest weights along,
Not in their bulk but in their order strong.

Thus pencils can by one slight touch restore
Smiles to that changed face that wept before.
With ease such fond chimæra we pursue,
As fancy frames for fancy to subdue:
But when ourselves to action we betake,
It shuns the mint like gold that chemists make.
How hard was then his task! at once to be
What in the body natural we see!
Man's architect distinctly did ordain
The charge of muscles, nerves, and of the brain,
Through viewless conduits spirits to dispense;
The springs of motion from the seat of sense.
'Twas not the hasty product of a day,
But the well-ripen'd fruit of wise delay.
He, like a patient angler, ere he strook,
Would let him play a while upon the hook.
Our healthful food the stomach labours thus,
At first embracing what it straight doth crush.
Wise leeches will not vain receipts obtrude,
While growing pains pronounce the humours crude:
Deaf to complaints they wait upon the ill,
Till some safe crisis authorise their skill.
Nor could his acts too close a vizor wear,
To 'scape their eyes whom guilt had taught to fear,
And guard with caution that polluted nest,
Whence Legion twice before was dispossess'd:
Once sacred house;—which when they enter'd in,
They thought the place could sanctify a sin;
Like those that vainly hoped kind Heaven would wink,
While to excess on martyrs' tombs they drink.
And as devouter Turks first warn their souls
To part, before they taste forbidden bowls:
So these, when their black crimes they went about,
First timely charm'd their useless conscience out.
Religion's name against itself was made;
The shadow served the substance to invade:
Like zealous missions, they did care pretend
Of souls in show, but made the gold their end.
Th' incensed powers beheld with scorn from high
An heaven so far distant from the sky,
Which durst, with horses' hoofs that beat the ground,
And martial brass, belie the thunder's sound.
'Twas hence at length just vengeance thought it fit
To speed their ruin by their impious wit.

Thus Sforza, cursed with a too fertile brain,
Lost by his wiles the power his wit did gain.
Henceforth their rage must spend at lesser rate,
Than in its flames to wrap a nation's fate.
Suffer'd to live, they are like Helots set,
A virtuous shame within us to beget.
For by example most we sinn'd before,
And glass-like clearness mix'd with frailty bore.
But since reform'd by what we did amiss,
We by our sufferings learn to prize our bliss:
Like early lovers, whose unpractised hearts
Were long the may-game of malicious arts,
When once they find their jealousies were vain,
With double heat renew their fires again.
'Twas this produced the joy that hurried o'er
Such swarms of English to the neighb'ring shore,
To fetch that prize, by which Batavia made
So rich amends for our impoverish'd trade.
Oh had you seen from Schevelin's barren shore,
(Crowded with troops, and barren now no more,)
Afflicted Holland to his farewell bring
True sorrow, Holland to regret a king!
While waiting him his royal fleet did ride,
And willing winds to their lowered sails denied.
The wavering streamers, flags, and standards out,
The merry seamen's rude but cheerful shout;
And last the cannons' voice that shook the skies,
And, as it fares in sudden ecstasies,
At once bereft us both of ears and eyes.
The Naseby, now no longer England's shame,
But better to be lost in Charles's name,
(Like some unequal bride in nobler sheets)
Receives her lord: the joyful London meets
The princely York, himself alone a freight;
The Swiftsure groans beneath great Gloster's weight:
Secure as when the halcyon breeds, with these,
He that was born to drown might cross the seas.
Heaven could not own a Providence, and take
The wealth three nations ventured at a stake.
The same indulgence Charles's voyage bless'd,
Which in his right had miracles confess'd.
The winds that never moderation knew,
Afraid to blow too much, too faintly blew:

Or, out of breath with joy, could not enlarge
Their straiten'd lungs, or conscious of their charge.
The British Amphitrite, smooth and clear,
In richer azure never did appear;
Proud her returning Prince to entertain
With the submitted fasces of the main.

And welcome now, great monarch, to your own;
Behold th' approaching cliffs of Albion:
It is no longer motion cheats your view,
As you meet it, the land approacheth you.
The land returns, and, in the white it wears,
The marks of penitence and sorrow bears.
But you, whose goodness your descent doth show,
Your heavenly parentage and earthly too;
By that same mildness, which your father's crown
Before did ravish, shall secure your own.
Not tied to rules of policy, you find,
Revenge less sweet than a forgiving mind.
Thus, when the Almighty would to Moses give
A sight of all he could behold and live;
A voice before his entry did proclaim
Long-suffering, goodness, mercy, in his name.
Your power to justice doth submit your cause,
Your goodness only is above the laws;
Whose rigid letter, while pronounced by you,
Is softer made. So winds that tempests brew,
When through Arabian groves they take their flight,
Made wanton with rich odours, lose their spite.
And as those lees, that trouble it, refine
The agitated soul of generous wine:
So tears of joy, for your returning, spilt,
Work out, and expiate our former guilt.
Methinks I see those crowds on Dover's strand,
Who, in their haste to welcome you to land,
Choked up the beach with their still growing store,
And made a wilder torrent on the shore:
While, spurr'd with eager thoughts of past delight,
Those, who had seen you, court a second sight;
Preventing still your steps, and making haste
To meet you often, wheresoe'er you pass'd.
How shall I speak of that triumphant day,
When you renew'd th' expiring pomp of May!

(A month that owns an interest in your name:
You and the flowers are its peculiar claim.)
That star, that at your birth shone out so bright,
It stain'd the duller sun's meridian light,
Did once again its potent fires renew,
Guiding our eyes to find and worship you.
And now Time's whiter series is begun,
Which in soft centuries shall smoothly run:
Those clouds, that overcast your morn, shall fly,
Dispell'd to farthest corners of the sky.
Our nation with united interest blest,
Not now content to poize, shall sway the rest.
Abroad your empire shall no limits know,
But, like the sea, in boundless circles flow.
Your much-loved fleet shall, with a wide command,
Besiege the petty monarchs of the land:
And as old Time his offspring swallow'd down,
Our ocean in its depths all seas shall drown.
Their wealthy trade from pirates' rapine free,
Our merchants shall no more adventurers be:
Nor in the farthest east those dangers fear,
Which humble Holland must dissemble here.
Spain to your gift alone her Indies owes;
For what the powerful takes not, he bestows:
And France, that did an exile's presence fear,
May justly apprehend you still too near.
At home the hateful names of parties cease,
And factious souls are wearied into peace.
The discontented now are only they,
Whose crimes before did your just cause betray:
Of those your edicts some reclaim from sin,
But most your life and blest example win.
Oh happy prince, whom Heaven hath taught the way
By paying vows to have more vows to pay!
Oh happy age! Oh times like those alone,
By fate reserved for great Augustus' throne!
When the joint growth of arms and art foreshow
The world a monarch, and that monarch you.

TO HIS SACRED MAJESTY CHARLES THE SECOND.

A PANEGYRIC ON HIS CORONATION.

In that wild deluge where the world was drown'd,
When life and sin one common tomb had found,
The first small prospect of a rising hill
With various notes of joy the ark did fill:
Yet when that flood in its own depths was drown'd,
It left behind it false and slippery ground;
And the more solemn pomp was still deferred,
Till new-born nature in fresh looks appeared.
Thus, royal sir, to see you landed here,
Was cause enough of triumph for a year:
Nor would your care those glorious joys repeat,
Till they at once might be secure and great:
Till your kind beams, by their continued stay,
Had warm'd the ground, and call'd the damps away.
Such vapours, while your powerful influence dries,
Then soonest vanish when they highest rise.
Had greater haste these sacred rites prepared,
Some guilty months had in your triumphs shared:
But this untainted year is all your own;
Your glories may without our crimes be shown.
We had not yet exhausted all our store,
When you refresh'd our joys by adding more:
As heaven, of old, dispensed celestial dew,
You gave us manna, and still give us new.
Now our sad ruins are removed from sight,
The season too comes fraught with new delight:
Time seems not now beneath his years to stoop,
Nor do his wings with sickly feathers droop:
Soft western winds waft o'er the gaudy spring,
And open'd scenes of flowers and blossoms bring,
To grace this happy day, while you appear,
Not king of us alone, but of the year.
All eyes you draw, and with the eyes the heart:
Of your own pomp yourself the greatest part:
Loud shouts the nation's happiness proclaim,
And heaven this day is feasted with your name.
Your cavalcade the fair spectators view,
From their high standings, yet look up to you.
From your brave train each singles out a prey,
And longs to date a conquest from your day.

Now charged with blessings while you seek repose,
Officious slumbers haste your eyes to close;
And glorious dreams stand ready to restore
The pleasing shapes of all you saw before.
Next to the sacred temple you are led,
Where waits a crown for your more sacred head:
How justly from the Church that crown is due,
Preserved from ruin, and restored by you!
The grateful choir their harmony employ,
Not to make greater, but more solemn joy.
Wrapt soft and warm your name is sent on high,
As flames do on the wings of incense fly:
Music herself is lost, in vain she brings
Her choicest notes to praise the best of kings:
Her melting strains in you a tomb have found,
And lie like bees in their own sweetness drown'd.
He that brought peace, all discord could atone,
His name is music of itself alone.
Now, while the sacred oil anoints your head,
And fragrant scents, begun from you, are spread
Through the large dome; the people's joyful sound,
Sent back, is still preserved in hallow'd ground;
Which, in one blessing mix'd, descends on you;
As heighten'd spirits fall in richer dew.
Not that our wishes do increase your store,
Full of yourself, you can admit no more;
We add not to your glory, but employ
Our time, like angels, in expressing joy.
Nor is it duty, or our hopes alone,
Create that joy, but full fruition:
We know those blessings, which we must possess,
And judge of future by past happiness.
No promise can oblige a prince so much
Still to be good, as long to have been such.
A noble emulation heats your breast,
And your own fame now robs you of your rest.
Good actions still must be maintain'd with good,
As bodies nourish'd with resembling food.
You have already quench'd sedition's brand;
And zeal, which burnt it, only warms the land.
The jealous sects, that dare not trust their cause,
So far from their own will as to the laws,
You for their umpire and their synod take,
And their appeal alone to Cæsar make.

Kind Heaven so rare a temper did provide,
That guilt, repenting, might in it confide.
Among our crimes oblivion may be set;
But 'tis our king's perfection to forget.
Virtues unknown to these rough northern climes
From milder heavens you bring without their crimes.
Your calmness does no after-storms p: ovide,
Nor seeming patience mortal anger hide.
When empire first from families did spring,
Then every father govern'd as a king:
But you, that are a sovereign prince, allay
Imperial power with your paternal sway.
From those great cares when ease your soul unbends,
Your pleasures are design'd to noble ends:
Born to command the mistress of the seas,
Your thoughts themselves in that blue empire please.
Hither in summer evenings you repair
To taste the fraicheur of the purer air:
Undaunted here you ride, when winter raves,
With Cæsar's heart that rose above the waves.
More I could sing, but fear my numbers stays;
No loyal subject dares that courage praise.
In stately frigates most delight you find,
Where well-drawn battles fire your martial mind.
What to your cares we owe, is learnt from hence,
When even your pleasures serve for our defence.
Beyond your court flows in th' admitted tide,
Where in new depths the wondering fishes glide:
Here in a royal bed the waters sleep;
When, tired at sea, within this bay they creep.
Here the mistrustful fowl no harm suspects,
So safe are all things which our king protects.
From your loved Thames a blessing yet is due,
Second alone to that it brought in you;
A queen, near whose chaste womb, ordain'd by fate,
The souls of kings unborn for bodies wait.
It was your love before made discord cease:
Your love is destined to your country's peace.
Both Indies, rivals in your bed, provide
With gold or jewels to adorn your bride.
This to a mighty king presents rich ore,
While that with incense does a god implore.
Two kingdoms wait your doom, and, as you choose,
This must receive a crown, or that must lose.

Thus, from your royal oak, like Jove's of old,
Are answers sought, and destinies foretold:
Propitious oracles are begg'd with vows,
And crowns that grow upon the sacred boughs.
Your subjects, while you weigh the nation's fate,
Suspend to both their doubtful love or hate:
Choose only, sir, that so they may possess,
With their own peace their children's happiness.

TO THE LORD CHANCELLOR EDWARD HYDE, EARL OF CLARENDON.

PRESENTED ON NEW YEAR'S DAY, 1662.

My Lord,

While flattering crowds officiously appear,
To give themselves, not you, an happy year;
And by the greatness of their presents prove
How much they hope, but not how well they love;
The Muses, who your early courtship boast,
Though now your flames are with their beauty lost,
Yet watch their time, that, if you have forgot
They were your mistresses, the world may not:
Decay'd by time and wars, they only prove
Their former beauty by your former love;
And now present, as ancient ladies do,
That, courted long, at length are forced to woo.
For still they look on you with such kind eyes,
As those that see the Church's sovereign rise;
From their own order chose, in whose high state,
They think themselves the second choice of fate.
When our great monarch into exile went,
Wit and religion suffer'd banishment.
Thus once, when Troy was wrapp'd in fire and smoke,
The helpless gods their burning shrines forsook;
They with the vanquish'd prince and party go,
And leave their temples empty to the foe.
At length the Muses stand, restored again
To that great charge which nature did ordain;
And their loved Druids seem revived by fate,
While you dispense the laws, and guide the state.

The nation's soul, our monarch, does dispense,
Through you, to us his vital influence;
You are the channel, where those spirits flow,
And work them higher, as to us they go.
In open prospect nothing bounds our eye,
Until the earth seems join'd unto the sky:
So in this hemisphere our utmost view
Is only bounded by our king and you:
Our sight is limited where you are join'd,
And beyond that no farther heaven can find.
So well your virtues do with his agree,
That, though your orbs of different greatness be,
Yet both are for each other's use disposed,
His to inclose, and yours to be inclosed.
Nor could another in your room have been,
Except an emptiness had come between.
Well may he then to you his cares impart,
And share his burden where he shares his heart.
In you his sleep still wakes; his pleasures find
Their share of business in your labouring mind.
So when the weary sun his place resigns,
He leaves his light, and by reflection shines.
Justice, that sits and frowns where public laws
Exclude soft mercy from a private cause,
In your tribunal most herself does please;
There only smiles because she lives at ease;
And, like young David, finds her strength the more,
When disencumber'd from those arms she wore.
Heaven would our royal master should exceed
Most in that virtue, which we most did need;
And his mild father (who too late did find
All mercy vain but what with power was join'd)
His fatal goodness left to fitter times,
Not to increase, but to absolve, our crimes:
But when the heir of this vast treasure knew
How large a legacy was left to you,
(Too great for any subject to retain)
He wisely tied it to the crown again:
Yet, passing through your hands, it gathers more,
As streams, through mines, bear tincture of their ore.
While empiric politicians use deceit,
Hide what they give, and cure but by a cheat;
You boldly show that skill which they pretend,
And work by means as noble as your end;

Which should you veil, we might unwind the clue,
As men do nature, till we came to you.
And as the Indies were not found, before
Those rich perfumes, which, from the happy shore,
The winds upon their balmy wings convey'd,
Whose guilty sweetness first their world betray'd;
So by your counsels we are brought to view
A rich and undiscovered world in you.
By you our monarch does that fame assure,
Which kings must have, or cannot live secure:
For prosperous princes gain their subjects' heart,
Who love that praise in which themselves have part.
By you he fits those subjects to obey,
As heaven's eternal monarch does convey
His power unseen, and man, to his designs
By his bright ministers the stars, inclines.
  Our setting sun, from his declining seat,
Shot beams of kindness on you, not of heat:
And, when his love was bounded in a few,
That were unhappy that they might be true,
Made you the favourite of his last sad times,
That is a sufferer in his subjects' crimes:
Thus those first favours you received, were sent,
Like heaven's rewards in earthly punishment.
Yet fortune, conscious of your destiny,
E'en then took care to lay you softly by;
And wrapp'd your fate among her precious things,
Kept fresh to be unfolded with your king's.
Shown all at once you dazzled so our eyes,
As new-born Pallas did the gods surprise:
When, springing forth from Jove's new closing wound,
She struck the warlike spear into the ground;
Which sprouting leaves did suddenly inclose,
And peaceful olives shaded as they rose.
  How strangely active are the arts of peace,
Whose restless motions less than wars do cease!
Peace is not freed from labour but from noise;
And war more force, but not more pains employs:
Such is the mighty swiftness of your mind,
That, like the earth, it leaves our sense behind,
While you so smoothly turn and roll our sphere,
That rapid motion does but rest appear.
For, as in nature's swiftness, with the throng
Of flying orbs while ours is borne along,

All seems at rest to the deluded eye,
Moved by the soul of the same harmony.
So, carried on by your unwearied care,
We rest in peace and yet in motion share.
Let envy then those crimes within you see,
From which the happy never must be free;
Envy, that does with misery reside,
The joy and the revenge of ruin'd pride.
Think it not hard, if at so cheap a rate
You can secure the constancy of fate,
Whose kindness sent what does their malice seem,
By lesser ills the greater to redeem.
Nor can we this weak shower a tempest call,
But drops of heat, that in the sunshine fall.
You have already wearied fortune so,
She cannot farther be your friend or foe;
But sits all breathless, and admires to feel
A fate so weighty, that it stops our wheel.
In all things else above our humble fate,
Your equal mind yet swells not into state,
But, like some mountain in those happy isles,
Where in perpetual spring young nature smiles,
Your greatness shows: no horror to affright,
But trees for shade, and flowers to court the sight:
Sometimes the hill submits itself a while
In small descents, which do its height beguile;
And sometimes mounts, but so as billows play,
Whose rise not hinders but makes short our way.
Your brow, which does no fear of thunder know,
Sees rolling tempests vainly beat below;
And, like Olympus' top, th' impression wears
Of love and friendship writ in former years.
Yet, unimpair'd with labours, or with time,
Your age but seems to a new youth to climb.
Thus heavenly bodies do our time beget,
And measure change, but share no part of it.
And still it shall without a weight increase,
Like this new-year, whose motions never cease.
For since the glorious course you have begun
Is led by Charles, as that is by the sun,
It must both weightless and immortal prove,
Because the centre of it is above.

SATIRE ON THE DUTCH.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1662.

As needy gallants, in the scrivener's hands,
Court the rich knaves that gripe their mortgaged lands;
The first fat buck of all the season's sent,
And keeper takes no fee in compliment;
The dotage of some Englishmen is such,
To fawn on those who ruin them, the Dutch.
They shall have all, rather than make a war
With those, who of the same religion are.
The Straits, the Guinea-trade, the herrings too;
Nay, to keep friendship, they shall pickle you.
Some are resolved not to find out the cheat,
But, cuckold-like, love them that do the feat.
What injuries soe'er upon us fall,
Yet still the same religion answers all.
Religion wheedled us to civil war,
Drew English blood, and Dutchmen's now would spare.
Be gull'd no longer; for you 'll find it true,
They have no more religion, faith! than you.
Interest 's the god they worship in their state,
And we, I take it, have not much of that.
Well monarchies may own religion's name,
But states are atheists in their very frame.
They share a sin; and such proportions fall,
That, like a stink, 'tis nothing to them all.
Think on their rapine, falsehood, cruelty,
And that what once they were, they still would be.
To one well-born the affront is worse and more,
When he's abused and baffled by a boor.
With an ill grace the Dutch their mischiefs do;
They've both ill nature and ill manners too.
Well may they boast themselves an ancient nation;
For they were bred ere manners were in fashion:
And their new commonwealth has set them free
Only from honour and civility.
Venetians do not more uncouthly ride,
Than did their lubber state mankind bestride.
Their sway became them with as ill a mien,
As their own paunches swell above their chin.
Yet is their empire no true growth but humour,
And only two kings' touch can cure the tumour.

As Cato, fruits of Afric did display;
Let us before our eyes their Indies lay:
All loyal English will like him conclude;
Let Cæsar live, and Carthage be subdued.

TO HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUCHESS OF YORK.

On the Memorable Victory gained by the Duke over the Hollanders, June 3, 1665, and on her Journey afterwards into the North.

MADAM,

WHEN, for our sakes, your hero you resign'd
To swelling seas, and every faithless wind;
When you released his courage, and set free
A valour fatal to the enemy;
You lodged your country's cares within your breast,
(The mansion where soft love should only rest:)
And, ere our foes abroad were overcome,
The noblest conquest you had gain'd at home.
Ah, what concerns did both your souls divide!
Your honour gave us what your love denied:
And 'twas for him much easier to subdue
Those foes he fought with, than to part from you.
That glorious day, which two such navies saw,
As each unmatch'd might to the world give law.
Neptune, yet doubtful whom he should obey,
Held to them both the trident of the sea:
The winds were hush'd, the waves in ranks were cast,
As awfully as when God's people past:
Those, yet uncertain on whose sails to blow,
These, where the wealth of nations ought to flow.
Then with the duke your highness ruled the day:
While all the brave did his command obey,
The fair and pious under you did pray.
How powerful are chaste vows! the wind and tide
You bribed to combat on the English side.
Thus to your much-loved lord you did convey
An unknown succour, sent the nearest way.
New vigour to his wearied arms you brought,
(So Moses was upheld while Israel fought)
While, from afar, we heard the cannon play,
Like distant thunder on a shiny day.

For absent friends we were ashamed to fear,
When we consider'd what you ventured there.
Ships, men, and arms, our country might restore,
But such a leader could supply no more.
With generous thoughts of conquest he did burn,
Yet fought not more to vanquish than return.
Fortune and victory he did pursue,
To bring them as his slaves to wait on you.
Thus beauty ravish'd the rewards of fame,
And the fair triumph'd when the brave o'ercame.
Then, as you meant to spread another way,
By land your conquests, far as his by sea,
Leaving our southern clime, you march'd along
The stubborn North, ten thousand Cupids strong.
Like commons the nobility resort,
In crowding heaps, to fill your moving court:
To welcome your approach the vulgar run,
Like some new envoy from the distant sun,
And country beauties by their lovers go,
Blessing themselves, and wondering at the show.
So when the new-born Phœnix first is seen,
Her feather'd subjects all adore their queen,
And while she makes her progress through the East,
From every grove her numerous train 's increased:
Each poet of the air her glory sings,
And round him the pleased audience clap their wings.

ANNUS MIRABILIS; THE YEAR OF WONDERS, 1666.

AN HISTORICAL POEM.

TO THE METROPOLIS OF GREAT BRITAIN,

THE MOST RENOWNED AND LATE FLOURISHING CITY OF LONDON,

IN ITS REPRESENTATIVES THE LORD MAYOR AND COURT OF ALDERMEN, THE SHERIFFS, AND COMMON COUNCIL OF IT.

As perhaps I am the first who ever presented a work of this nature to the metropolis of any nation, so it is likewise consonant to justice, that he who was to give the first example of such a dedication should begin it with that city which has set a pattern to all others of true loyalty, invincible courage, and unshaken constancy. Other cities have been praised for the same virtues, but I am much deceived if any have so dearly purchased their reputation; their fame has been won them by cheaper trials than an expensive, though necessary war, a consuming pestilence, and a more consuming fire. To submit yourselves with that humility to the judgments of Heaven, and at the same time to raise yourselves with that vigour above all human enemies; to be combated at once from above and from below; to be struck down and to triumph: I know not whether such trials have been ever paralleled in any nation: the resolution and successes of them never can be. Never had prince or people more mutual reason to love each other, if suffering for each other can endear affection. You have come together a pair of matchless lovers, through many difficulties; he, through a long exile, various traverses of fortune, and the interposition of many rivals, who violently ravished and withheld you from him; and certainly you have had your share in sufferings. But Providence has cast upon you want of trade, that you might appear bountiful to your country's necessities; and the rest of your afflictions are not more the effects of God's displeasure (frequent examples of them having been in the reign of the most excellent princes) than occasions for the manifesting of your Christian and civil virtues. To you, therefore, this year of wonders is justly dedicated, because you have made it so. You, who are to stand a wonder to all years and ages, and who have built yourselves an immortal monument on your own ruins. You are now a Phœnix in her ashes, and, as far as humanity can approach, a great emblem of the suffering Deity; but Heaven never made so much piety and virtue to leave it miserable. I have heard, indeed, of some virtuous persons who have ended unfortunately, but never of any virtuous nation.

Providence is engaged too deeply when the cause becomes so general; and I cannot imagine it has resolved the ruin of that people at home which it has blessed abroad with such successes. I am therefore to conclude that your sufferings are at an end; and that one part of my poem has not been more an history of your destruction than the other a prophecy of your restoration; the accomplishment of which happiness, as it is the wish of all true Englishmen, so is it by none more passionately desired than by

The greatest of your admirers,
And most humble of your Servants,
JOHN DRYDEN.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE ENSUING POEM,

IN

A LETTER TO THE HON. SIR ROBERT HOWARD.

SIR,

I AM so many ways obliged to you, and so little able to return your favours, that, like those who owe too much, I can only live by getting farther into your debt. You have not only been careful of my fortune, which was the effect of your nobleness, but you have been solicitous of my reputation, which is that of your kindness. It is not long since I gave you the trouble of perusing a play for me, and now, instead of an acknowledgment, I have given you a greater, in the correction of a poem. But since you are to bear this persecution, I will at least give you the encouragement of a martyr; you could never suffer in a nobler cause. For I have chosen the most heroic subject which any poet could desire: I have taken upon me to describe the motives, the beginning, progress, and successes of a most just and necessary war: in it, the care, management, and prudence of our king; the conduct and valour of a royal admiral, and of two incomparable generals; the invincible courage of our captains and seamen; and three glorious victories, the result of all. After this, I have in the Fire the most deplorable, but withal the greatest, argument that can be imagined: the destruction being so swift, so sudden, so vast, and miserable, as nothing can parallel in story. The former part of this poem relating to the war, is but a due expiation for my not serving my king and country in it. All gentlemen are almost obliged to it; and I know no reason we should give that advantage to the commonalty of England, to be foremost in brave actions, which the noblesse of France would never suffer in their

peasants. I should not have written this but to a person who has been ever forward to appear in all employments, whither his honour and generosity have called him. The latter part of my poem, which describes the Fire, I owe, first to the piety and fatherly affection of our monarch to his suffering subjects; and, in the second place, to the courage, loyalty, and magnanimity of the city; both which were so conspicuous, that I have wanted words to celebrate them as they deserve. I have called my poem historical, not epic, though both the actions and actors are as much heroic as any poem can contain. But since the action is not properly one, nor that accomplished in the last successes, I have judged it too bold a title for a few stanzas, which are little more in number than a single Iliad, or the longest of the Æneids. For this reason (I mean not of length, but broken action, tied too severely to the laws of history) I am apt to agree with those who rank Lucan rather among historians in verse, than epic poets: in whose room, if I am not deceived, Silius Italicus, though a worse writer, may more justly be admitted. I have chosen to write my poem in quatrians, or stanzas of four in alternate rhyme, because I have ever judged them more noble, and of greater dignity, both for the sound and number, than any other verse in use amongst us; in which I am sure I have your approbation. The learned languages have certainly a great advantage of us, in not being tied to the slavery of any rhyme; and were less constrained in the quantity of every syllable, which they might vary with spondees or dactyls, besides so many other helps of grammatical figures, for the lengthening or abbreviation of them, than the modern are in the close of that one syllable, which often confines, and more often corrupts the sense of all the rest. But in this necessity of our rhymes, I have always found the couplet verse most easy, though not so proper for this occasion: for there the work is sooner at an end, every two lines concluding the labour of the poet; but in quatrians he is to carry it farther on, and not only so, but to bear along in his head the troublesome sense of four lines together. For those who write correctly in this kind, must needs acknowledge, that the last line of the stanza is to be considered in the composition of the first. Neither can we give ourselves the liberty of making any part of a verse for the sake of rhyme, or concluding with a word which is not current English, or using the variety of female rhymes; all which our fathers practised: and for the female rhymes, they are still in use amongst other nations; with the Italian in every line, with the Spaniard promiscuously, with the French alternately; as those who have read the Alarique, the Pucelle, or any of their later poems, will agree with me. And besides this, they write in Alexandrines, or verses of six feet; such as amongst us is the old translation of Homer by Chapman; all which, by lengthening

of their chain, makes the sphere of their activity the larger. I have dwelt too long upon the choice of my stanza, which you may remember is much better defended in the preface to Gondibert; and therefore I will hasten to acquaint you with my endeavours in the writing. In general I will only say, I have never yet seen the description of any naval fight in the proper terms which are used at sea; and if there be any such, in another language, as that of Lucan in the third of his Pharsalia, yet I could not avail myself of it in the English; the terms of art in every tongue bearing more of the idiom of it than any other words. We hear indeed among our poets, of the thundering of guns, the smoke, the disorder, and the slaughter; but all these are common notions. And certainly, as those who, in a logical dispute, keep in general terms, would hide a fallacy, so those, who do it in any poetical description, would veil their ignorance.

> Descriptas servare vices operumque colores,
> Cur ego, si nequeo ignoroque, Poeta salutor? *

For my own part, if I had little knowledge of the sea, yet I have thought it no shame to learn; and if I have made some few mistakes, 'tis only, as you can bear me witness, because I have wanted opportunity to correct them; the whole poem being first written, and now sent you from a place, where I have not so much as the converse of any seaman. Yet though the trouble I had in writing it was great, it was more than recompensed by the pleasure. I found myself so warm in celebrating the praises of military men, two such especially as the Prince and General, that it is no wonder if they inspired me with thoughts above my ordinary level. And I am well satisfied, that, as they are incomparably the best subject I ever had, excepting only the Royal Family, so also, that this I have written of them is much better than what I have performed on any other. I have been forced to help out other arguments; but this has been bountiful to me: they have been low and barren of praise, and I have exalted them, and made them fruitful; but here—*Omnia sponte suâ reddit justissima tellus.* I have had a large, a fair, and a pleasant field; so fertile, that, without my cultivating, it has given me two harvests in a summer, and in both oppressed the reaper. All other greatness in subjects is only counterfeit; it will not endure the test of danger; the greatness of arms is only real; other greatness burdens a nation with its weight, this supports it with its strength. And as it is the happiness of the age, so it is the peculiar goodness of the best of kings, that we may praise his subjects without offending him. Doubtless it proceeds from a just confidence of his own virtue, which the lustre of no other can be so great as to darken in him; for the good or the valiant are never safely praised under a bad or

a degenerate prince. But to return from this digression to a farther account of my poem; I must crave leave to tell you that as I have endeavoured to adorn it with noble thoughts, so much more to express those thoughts with elocution. The composition of all poems is, or ought to be, of wit; and wit in the poet, or wit-writing (if you will give me leave to use a school distinction), is no other than the faculty of imagination in the writer, which, like a nimble spaniel, beats over and ranges through the field of memory, till it springs the quarry it hunted after; or, without metaphor, which searches over all the memory for the species or ideas of those things which it designs to represent. Wit written is that which is well defined, the happy result of thought, or product of imagination. But to proceed from wit, in the general notion of it, to the proper wit of an heroic or historical poem, I judge it chiefly to consist in the delightful imaging of persons, actions, passions, or things. 'Tis not the jerk or sting of an epigram, nor the seeming contradiction of a poor antithesis, (the delight of an ill-judging audience in a play of rhyme) nor the gingle of a more poor Paronomasia; neither is it so much the morality of a grave sentence, affected by Lucan, but more sparingly used by Virgil; but it is some lively and apt description, dressed in such colours of speech, that it sets before your eyes the absent object, as perfectly and more delightfully than nature. So then the first happiness of the poet's imagination is properly invention or finding of the thought; the second is fancy, or the variation, deriving or moulding of that thought as the judgment represents it proper to the subject; the third is elocution, or the art of clothing and adorning that thought, so found and varied, in apt, significant, and sounding words: the quickness of the imagination is seen in the invention, the fertility in the fancy, and the accuracy in the expression. For the two first of these, Ovid is famous among the poets; for the latter, Virgil. Ovid images more often the movements and affections of the mind, either combating between two contrary passions, or extremely discomposed by one. His words therefore are the least part of his care; for he pictures nature in disorder, with which the study and choice of words is inconsistent. This is the proper wit of dialogue or discourse, and consequently of the drama, where all that is said is to be supposed the effect of sudden thought; which, though it excludes not the quickness of wit in repartees, yet admits not a too curious election of words, too frequent allusions, or use of tropes, or in fine anything that shows remoteness of thought or labour in the writer. On the other side, Virgil speaks not so often to us in the person of another, like Ovid, but in his own: he relates almost all things as from himself, and thereby gains more liberty than the other, to express his thoughts with all the graces of elocution, to write more figuratively, and to confess as

well the labour, as the force of his imagination. Though he describes his Dido well and naturally, in the violence of her passions, yet he must yield in that to the Myrrha, the Biblis, the Althæa, of Ovid; for as great an admirer of him as I am, I must acknowledge, that if I see not more of their souls than I see of Dido's, at least I have a greater concernment for them: and that convinces me, that Ovid has touched those tender strokes more delicately than Virgil could. But when action or persons are to be described, when any such image is to be set before us, how bold, how masterly are the strokes of Virgil!—We see the objects he presents us with in their native figures, in their proper motions; but so we see them, as our own eyes could never have beheld them so beautiful in themselves. We see the soul of the poet, like that universal one of which he speaks, informing and moving through all his pictures:

—— Totamque infusa per artus
Mens agitat molem, et magno se corpore miscet.

We behold him embellishing his images as he makes Venus breathing beauty upon her son Æneas.

—— lumenque juventæ
Purpureum, et lætos oculis afflârat honores:
Quale manus addunt eb ri decus, aut ubi flavo
Argentum Pariusve lapis circundatur auro.

See his Tempest, his Funeral Sports, his Combat of Turnus and Æneas; and in his Georgics, which I esteem the divinest part of all his writings, the Plague, the Country, the Battle of the Bulls, the Labour of the Bees, and those many other excellent images of nature, most of which are neither great in themselves nor have any natural ornament to bear them up; but the words wherewith he describes them are so excellent, that it might be well applied to him, which was said by Ovid, *Materiam superabat opus.* The very sound of his words has often somewhat that is connatural to the subject; and while we read him, we sit, as in a play, beholding the scenes of what he represents. To perform this, he made frequent use of tropes, which you know change the nature of a known word, by applying it to some other signification; and this it is which Horace means in his epistle to the Pisos:

Dixeris egregiè, notum si callida verbum
Reddiderit junctura novum——

But I am sensible I have presumed too far to entertain you with a rude discourse of that art which you both know so well, and put into practice with so much happiness. Yet before I leave Virgil, I must own the vanity to tell you, and by you the world, that he has been my master in this poem. I have followed him everywhere, I know not with what success, but I am sure with diligence enough; my images are many of them copied

from him, and the rest are imitations of him. My expressions, also, are as near as the idioms of the two languages would admit of in translation. And this, sir, I have done with that boldness for which I will stand accountable to any of our little critics, who, perhaps, are no better acquainted with him than I am. Upon your first perusal of this poem, you have taken notice of some words which I have innovated (if it be too bold for me to say refined) upon his Latin; which, as I offer not to introduce into English prose, so I hope they are neither improper nor altogether inelegant in verse; and in this Horace will again defend me.

> Et nova, fictaque nuper, habebunt verba fidem, si
> Græco fonte cadunt, parcè detorta——

The inference is exceeding plain; for if a Roman poet might have liberty to coin a word, supposing only that it was derived from the Greek, was put into a Latin termination, and that he used this liberty but seldom, and with modesty; how much more justly may I challenge that privilege to do it with the same prerequisites, from the best and most judicious of Latin writers? In some places, where either the fancy or the words were his, or any other's, I have noted it in the margin, that I might not seem a plagiary; in others I have neglected it, to avoid as well tediousness as the affectation of doing it too often. Such descriptions or images well wrought, which I promise not for mine, are, as I have said, the adequate delight of heroic poesy; for they beget admiration, which is its proper object; as the images of the burlesque, which is contrary to this, by the same reason beget laughter: for the one shows nature beautified, as in the picture of a fair woman, which we all admire; the other shows her deformed, as in that of a lazar, or of a fool with distorted face and antic gestures, at which we cannot forbear to laugh, because it is a deviation from nature. But though the same images serve equally for the Epic poesy, and for the Historic and Panegyric, which are branches of it, yet a several sort of sculpture is to be used in them. If some of them are to be like those of Juvenal, *Stantes in curribus Æmiliani*, heroes drawn in their triumphal chariots, and in their full proportion; others are to be like that of Virgil, *Spirantia mollius æra*: there is somewhat more of softness and tenderness to be shown in them. You will soon find I write not this without concern. Some, who have seen a paper of verses, which I wrote last year to her Highness the Duchess, have accused them of that only thing I could defend in them. They said, I did *humi serpere*, that I wanted not only height of fancy but dignity of words to set it off. I might well answer with that of Horace, *Nunc non erat his locus*; I knew I addressed them to a lady, and, accordingly, I affected the softness of expression and the smoothness of

measure, rather than the height of thought; and in what I did endeavour, it is no vanity to say I have succeeded. I detest arrogance; but there is some difference betwixt that and a just defence. But I will not farther bribe your candour or the reader's. I leave them to speak for me; and, if they can, to make out that character, not pretending to a greater, which I have given them.

And now, sir, 'tis time I should relieve you from the tedious length of this account. You have better and more profitable employment for your hours, and I wrong the public to detain you longer. In conclusion, I must leave my poem to you with all its faults, which I hope to find fewer in the printing by your emendations. I know you are not of the number of those of whom the younger Pliny speaks: *Nec sunt parùm multi, qui carpere amicos suos judicium vocant:* I am rather too secure of you on that side. Your candour in pardoning my errors may make you more remiss in correcting them; if you will not withal consider that they come into the world with your approbation and through your hands. I beg from you the greatest favour you can confer upon an absent person, since I repose upon your management what is dearest to me, my fame and reputation; and therefore I hope it will stir you up to make my poem fairer by many of your blots; if not, you know the story of the gamester who married the rich man's daughter, and when her father denied the portion, christened all his children by his surname, that if, in conclusion, they must beg, they should do so by one name as well as by the other. But since the reproach of my faults will light on you, 'tis but reason I should do you that justice to the readers, to let them know that if there be anything tolerable in this poem, they owe the argument to your choice, the writing to your encouragement, the correction to your judgment, and the care of it to your friendship, to which he must ever acknowledge himself to owe all things, who is,

Sir,

The most obedient

And most faithful of your Servants,

JOHN DRYDEN.

From Charlton, in Wiltshire,
Nov. 10, 1666.

ANNUS MIRABILIS;

THE YEAR OF WONDERS, 1666.

In thriving arts long time had Holland grown,
Crouching at home and cruel when abroad:
Scarce leaving us the means to claim our own;
Our king they courted, and our merchants awed.

Trade, which like blood should circularly flow,
Stopp'd in their channels, found its freedom lost:
Thither the wealth of all the world did go,
And seem'd but shipwreck'd on so base a coast.

For them alone the heavens had kindly heat;
In eastern quarries ripening precious dew:
For them the Idumæan balm did sweat,
And in hot Ceylon spicy forests grew.

The sun but seem'd the labourer of their year:
Each waxing moon supplied her watery store,
To swell those tides, which from the line did bear
Their brim-full vessels to the Belgian shore.

Thus, mighty in her ships, stood Carthage long,
And swept the riches of the world from far;
Yet stoop'd to Rome, less wealthy, but more strong:
And this may prove our second Punic war.

What peace can be, where both to one pretend?
(But they more diligent, and we more strong)
Or if a peace, it soon must have an end;
For they would grow too powerful were it long.

Behold two nations then, engaged so far,
That each seven years the fit must shake each land:
Where France will side to weaken us by war,
Who only can his vast designs withstand.

See how he feeds th' Iberian with delays,
To render us his timely friendship vain:
And while his secret soul on Flanders preys,
He rocks the cradle of the babe of Spain.

Such deep designs of empire does he lay
O'er them, whose cause he seems to take in hand;
And prudently would make them lords at sea,
To whom with ease he can give laws by land.

This saw our king; and long within his breast
His pensive counsels balanced to and fro:
He grieved the land he freed should be oppress'd,
And he less for it than usurpers do.

His generous mind the fair idea drew
Of fame and honour, which in dangers lay;
Where wealth, like fruit on precipices, grew,
Not to be gather'd but by birds of prey.

The loss and gain each fatally were great;
And still his subjects call'd aloud for war;
But peaceful kings, o'er martial people set,
Each other's poise and counterbalance are.

He first survey'd the charge with careful eyes,
Which none but mighty monarchs could maintain;
Yet judged, like vapours that from limbecs rise,
It would in richer showers descend again.

At length resolved t'assert the watery ball,
He in himself did whole Armadas bring:
Him aged seamen might their master call,
And choose for general, were he not their king.

It seems as every ship their sovereign knows,
His awful summons they so soon obey;
So hear the scaly herd when Proteus blows,
And so to pasture follow through the sea.

To see this fleet upon the ocean move,
Angels drew wide the curtains of the skies;
And heaven, as if there wanted lights above,
For tapers made two glaring comets rise.

Whether they unctuous exhalations are,
Fired by the sun, or seeming so alone:
Or each some more remote and slippery star,
Which loses footing when to mortals shown.

Or one, that bright companion of the sun,
Whose glorious aspect seal'd our new-born king;
And now, a round of greater years begun,
New influence from his walks of light did bring.

Victorious York did first with famed success,
To his known valour make the Dutch give place:
Thus Heaven our monarch's fortune did confess,
Beginning conquest from his royal race.

But since it was decreed, auspicious king,
In Britain's right that thou shouldst wed the main,
Heaven, as a gage, would cast some precious thing,
And therefore doom'd that Lawson should be slain.

Lawson amongst the foremost met his fate,
Whom sea-green Sirens from the rocks lament:
Thus as an offering for the Grecian state,
He first was kill'd who first to battle went.

Their chief blown up in air, not waves, expired,
To which his pride presumed to give the law:
The Dutch confess'd Heaven present, and retired,
And all was Britain the wide ocean saw.

To nearest ports their shatter'd ships repair,
Where by our dreadful cannon they lay awed;
So reverently men quit the open air,
Where thunder speaks the angry gods abroad.

And now approach'd their fleet from India, fraught
With all the riches of the rising sun:
And precious sand from southern climates brought,
The fatal regions where the war begun.

Like hunted castors, conscious of their store,
Their way-laid wealth to Norway's coasts they bring:
There first the North's cold bosom spices bore,
And winter brooded on the eastern spring.

By the rich scent we found our perfumed prey,
Which, flank'd with rocks, did close in covert lie;
And round about their murdering cannon lay,
At once to threaten and invite the eye.

Fiercer than cannon, and than rocks more hard,
The English undertake th' unequal war:
Seven ships alone, by which the port is barr'd,
Besiege the Indies, and all Denmark dare.

These fight like husbands, but like lovers those:
These fain would keep, and those more fain enjoy
And to such height their frantic passion grows,
That what both love, both hazard to destroy.

Amidst whole heaps of spices lights a ball,
And now their odours arm'd against them fly
Some preciously by shatter'd porcelain fall,
And some by aromatic splinters die.

And though by tempests of the prize bereft,
In heaven's inclemency some ease we find:
Our foes we vanquish'd by our valour left,
And only yielded to the seas and wind.

Nor wholly lost we so deserved a prey;
For storms, repenting, part of it restored:
Which as a tribute from the Baltic sea,
The British ocean sent her mighty lord.

Go, mortals, now, and vex yourselves in vain
For wealth, which so uncertainly must come:
When what was brought so far, and with such pain,
Was only kept to lose it nearer home.

The son, who, twice three months on th' ocean toss'd,
Prepared to tell what he had pass'd before,
Now sees in English ships the Holland coast,
And parents' arms, in vain, stretch'd from the shore.

This careful husband had been long away,
Whom his chaste wife and little children mourn;
Who on their fingers learn'd to tell the day
On which their father promised to return.

Such are the proud designs of human-kind,
And so we suffer shipwreck everywhere!
Alas! what port can such a pilot find,
Who in the night of fate must blindly steer!

The undistinguish'd seeds of good and ill,
Heaven, in his bosom, from our knowledge hides:
And draws them in contempt of human skill,
Which oft for friends mistaken foes provides.

Let Munster's prelate ever be accursed,
In whom we seek the German faith in vain:
Alas! that he should teach the English first,
That fraud and avarice in the Church could reign!

Happy, who never trust a stranger's will,
Whose friendship's in his interest understood!
Since money given but tempts him to be ill,
When power is too remote to make him good.

Till now, alone the mighty nations strove;
The rest, at gaze, without the lists did stand:
And threatening France, placed like a painted Jove,
Kept idle thunder in his lifted hand.

That eunuch guardian of rich Holland's trade,
Who envies us what he wants power t' enjoy;
Whose noiseful valour does no foe invade,
And weak assistance will his friends destroy.

Offended that we fought without his leave,
He takes this time his secret hate to show:
Which Charles does with a mind so calm receive,
As one that neither seeks nor shuns his foe.

With France, to aid the Dutch, the Danes unite:
France as their tyrant, Denmark as their slave.
But when with one three nations join to fight,
They silently confess that one more brave.

Louis had chased the English from his shore;
But Charles the French as subjects does invite:
Would Heaven for each some Solomon restore,
Who, by their mercy, may decide their right!

Were subjects so but only by their choice,
And not from birth did forced dominion take,
Our prince alone would have the public voice;
And all his neighbours' realms would deserts make.

He without fear a dangerous war pursues,
Which without rashness he began before:
As honour made him first the danger choose,
So still he makes it good on virtue's score.

The doubled charge his subjects' love supplies,
Who, in that bounty, to themselves are kind:
So glad Egyptians see their Nilus rise,
And in his plenty their abundance find.

With equal power he does two chiefs create,
Two such as each seem'd worthiest when alone;
Each able to sustain a nation's fate,
Since both had found a greater in their own.

Both great in courage, conduct, and in fame,
Yet neither envious of the other's praise;
Their duty, faith, and interest too the same,
Like mighty partners equally they raise.

The prince long time had courted fortune's love,
But once possess'd did absolutely reign:
Thus with their Amazons the heroes strove,
And conquer'd first those beauties they would gain.

The duke behold, like Scipio, with disdain,
That Carthage, which he ruin'd, rise once more;
And shook aloft the fasces of the main,
To fright those slaves with what they felt before.

Together to the watery camp they haste,
Whom matrons passing to their children show:
Infants' first vows for them to heaven are cast,
And future people bless them as they go.

With them no riotous pomp, nor Asian train,
To infect a navy with their gawdy fears;
To make slow fights, and victories but vain:
But war, severely, like itself, appears.

Diffusive of themselves, where'er they pass,
They make that warmth in others they expect;
Their valour works like bodies on a glass,
And does its image on their men project.

Our fleet divides, and straight the Dutch appear,
In number, and a famed commander, bold:
The narrow seas can scarce their navy bear,
Or crowded vessels can their soldiers hold.

The Duke, less numerous, but in courage more,
On wings of all the winds to combat flies:
His murdering guns a loud defiance roar,
And bloody crosses on his flag-staffs rise.

Both furl their sails, and strip them for the fight;
Their folded sheets dismiss the useless air:
Th' Elean plains could boast no nobler fight,
When struggling champions did their bodies bare.

Borne each by other in a distant line,
The sea-built forts in dreadful order move:
So vast the noise, as if not fleets did join,
But lands unfix'd, and floating nations strove.

Now pass'd, on either side they nimbly tack;
Both strive to intercept and guide the wind:
And, in its eye, more closely they come back,
To finish all the deaths they left behind.

On high-raised decks the haughty Belgians ride,
Beneath whose shade our humble frigates go:
Such port the elephant bears, and so defied
By the rhinoceros her unequal foe.

And as the build, so different is the fight;
Their mounting shot is on our sails design'd:
Deep in their hulls our deadly bullets light,
And through the yielding planks a passage find.

Our dreaded admiral from far they threat,
Whose batter'd rigging their whole war receives:
All bare, like some old oak which tempests beat,
He stands and sees below his scatter'd leaves.

Heroes of old, when wounded, shelter sought:
But he, who meets all danger with disdain,
Ev'n in their face his ship to anchor brought,
And steeple-high stood propt upon the main.

At this excess of courage, all amazed,
The foremost of his foes awhile withdraw:
With such respect in enter'd Rome they gazed,
Who on high chairs the god-like fathers saw.

And now, as where Patroclus' body lay,
Here Trojan chiefs advanced, and there the Greek;
Ours o'er the Duke their pious wings display,
And theirs the noblest spoils of Britain seek.

Meantime his busy mariners he hastes,
His shatter'd sails with rigging to restore;
And willing pines ascend his broken masts,
Whose lofty heads rise higher than before.

Straight to the Dutch he turns his dreadful prow,
More fierce th' important quarrel to decide:
Like swans, in long array his vessels show,
Whose crests advancing do the waves divide.

They charge, recharge, and all along the sea
They drive, and squander the huge Belgian fleet.
Berkley alone, who nearest danger lay,
Did a like fate with lost Crëusa meet.

The night comes on, we eager to pursue
The combat still, and they ashamed to leave:
Till the last streaks of dying day withdrew,
And doubtful moon-light did our rage deceive.

In th' English fleet each ship resounds with joy
And loud applause of their great leader's fame:
In fiery dreams the Dutch they still destroy,
And, slumbering smile at the imagined flame.

Not so the Holland fleet, who, tired and done,
Stretch'd on their decks like weary oxen lie:
Faint sweats all down their mighty members run;
Vast bulks which little souls but ill supply.

In dreams they fearful precipices tread:
Or, shipwreck'd, labour to some distant shore:
Or in dark churches walk among the dead;
They wake with horror, and dare sleep no more.

The morn they look on with unwilling eyes,
Till from their main-top joyful news they hear
Of ships, which by their mould bring new supplies,
And in their colours Belgian lions bear.

Our watchful general had discern'd from far
This mighty succour, which made glad the foe:
He sigh'd, but, like a father of the war,
His face spake hope, while deep his sorrows flow.

His wounded men he first sends off to shore,
Never, till now, unwilling to obey:
They, not their wounds, but want of strength deplore,
And think them happy who with him can stay.

Then to the rest, "Rejoice," said he, "to-day;
In you the fortune of Great Britain lies:
Among so brave a people, you are they
Whom Heaven has chose to fight for such a prize.

"If number English courages could quell,
We should at first have shunn'd, not met our foes:
Whose numerous sails the fearful only tell:
Courage from hearts, and not from numbers, grows."

He said, nor needed more to say: with haste
To their known stations cheerfully they go;
And all at once, disdaining to be last,
Solicit every gale to meet the foe.

Nor did th' encouraged Belgians long delay,
But bold in others, not themselves, they stood:
So thick, our navy scarce could steer their way,
But seem'd to wander in a moving wood.

Our little fleet was now engaged so far,
That, like the sword-fish with the whale, they fought:
The combat only seem'd a civil war,
Till through their bowels we our passage wrought.

Never had valour, no not ours, before
Done aught like this upon the land or main,
Where not to be o'ercome was to do more
Than all the conquests former kings did gain.

The mighty ghosts of our great Harrys rose,
And armed Edwards look'd with anxious eyes,
To see this fleet among unequal foes,
By which fate promised them their Charles should rise.

Meantime the Belgians tack upon our rear,
And raking chase-guns through our sterns they send:
Close by, their fire-ships, like jackals, appear,
Who on their lions for the prey attend.

Silent in smoke of cannon they come on:
Such vapours once did fiery Cacus hide:
In these the height of pleased revenge is shown,
Who burn contented by another's side.

Sometimes from fighting squadrons of each fleet,
Deceived themselves, or to preserve some friend,
Two grappling Ætnas on the ocean meet,
And English fires with Belgian flames contend.

Now, at each tack, our little fleet grows less;
And, like maim'd fowl, swim lagging on the main;
Their greater loss their numbers scarce confess,
While they lose cheaper than the English gain.

Have you not seen, when, whistled from the fist,
Some falcon stoops at what her eye design'd,
And, with her eagerness the quarry miss'd,
Straight flies at check, and clips it down the wind?

The dastard crow that to the wood made wing,
And sees the groves no shelter can afford,
With her loud caws her craven kind does bring,
Who, safe in numbers, cuff the noble bird.

Among the Dutch thus Albemarle did fare:
He could not conquer, and disdain'd to fly;
Past hope of safety, 'twas his latest care,
Like falling Cæsar, decently to die.

Yet pity did his manly spirit move,
To see those perish who so well had fought;
And generously with his despair he strove,
Resolved to live till he their safety wrought.

Let other muses write his prosperous fate,
Of conquer'd nations tell, and kings restored:
But mine shall sing of his eclipsed estate,
Which, like the sun's, more wonders does afford.

He drew his mighty frigates all before,
On which the foe his fruitless force employs:
His weak ones deep into his rear he bore
Remote from guns, as sick men from the noise.

His fiery cannon did their passage guide,
And following smoke obscured them from the foe;
Thus Israel safe from the Egyptian's pride,
By flaming pillars, and by clouds, did go.

Elsewhere the Belgian force we did defeat,
But here our courages did theirs subdue:
So Xenophon once led that famed retreat,
Which first the Asian empire overthrew.

The foe approach'd, and one for his bold sin
Was sunk; as he that touch'd the ark was slain:
The wild waves master'd him and suck'd him in,
And smiling eddies dimpled on the main.

This seen, the rest at awful distance stood:
As if they had been there as servants set
To stay, or to go on, as he thought good,
And not pursue but wait on his retreat.

So Libyan huntsmen, on some sandy plain,
From shady coverts roused, the lion chase:
The kingly beast roars out with loud disdain,
And slowly moves, unknowing to give place.

But if some one approach to dare his force,
He swings his tail, and swiftly turns him round;
With one paw seizes on his trembling horse,
And with the other tears him to the ground.

Amidst these toils succeeds the balmy night;
Now hissing waters the quench'd guns restore;
And weary waves, withdrawing from the fight,
Lie lull'd and panting on the silent shore.

The moon shone clear on the becalmed flood,
Where while her beams like glittering silver play,
Upon the deck our careful general stood,
And deeply mused on the succeeding day.

"That happy sun," said he, "will rise again,
Who twice victorious did our navy see:
And I alone must view him rise in vain,
Without one ray of all his star for me.

"Yet like an English general will I die,
And all the ocean make my spacious grave:
Women and cowards on the land may lie,
The sea's a tomb that's proper for the brave."

Restless he pass'd the remnants of the night,
Till the fresh air proclaim'd the morning nigh:
And burning ships, the martyrs of the fight,
With paler fires beheld the eastern sky.

But now, his stores of ammunition spent,
His naked valour is his only guard;
Rare thunders are from his dumb cannon sent,
And solitary guns are scarcely heard.

Thus far had fortune power, here forced to stay,
Nor longer durst with virtue be at strife;
This, as a ransom, Albemarle did pay
For all the glories of so great a life.

For now brave Rupert from afar appears,
Whose waving streamers the glad general knows:
With full-spread sails his eager navy steers,
And every ship in swift proportion grows.

The anxious prince had heard the cannon long,
And from that length of time dire omens drew
Of English overmatch'd, and Dutch too strong,
Who never fought three days, but to pursue.

Then, as an eagle, who, with pious care,
Was beating widely on the wing for prey,
To her now silent eyrie does repair,
And finds her callow infants forced away:

Stung with her love, she stoops upon the plain,
The broken air loud whistling as she flies:
She stops and listens, and shoots forth again,
And guides her pinions by her young ones' cries.

With such kind passion hastes the prince to fight,
And spreads his flying canvas to the sound;
Him, whom no danger, were he there, could fright,
Now, absent, every little noise can wound.

As in a drought the thirsty creatures cry,
And gape upon the gather'd clouds for rain:
And first the martlet meets it in the sky,
And with wet wings joys all the feather'd train.

With such glad hearts did our despairing men
Salute the appearance of the prince's fleet:
And each ambitiously would claim the ken,
That with first eyes did distant safety meet.

The Dutch, who came like greedy hinds before,
To reap the harvest their ripe ears did yield:
Now look like those, when rolling thunders roar,
And sheets of lightning blast the standing field.

Full in the prince's passage, hills of sand
And dangerous flats in secret ambush lay,
Where the false tides skim o'er the cover'd land,
And seamen with dissembled depths betray.

The wily Dutch, who, like fall'n angels, fear'd
This new Messiah's coming, there did wait,
And round the verge their braving vessels steer'd,
To tempt his courage with so fair a bait.

But he, unmoved, contemns their idle threat,
Secure of fame whene'er he please to fight:
His cold experience tempers all his heat,
And inbred worth does boasting valour slight.

Heroic virtue did his actions guide,
And he the substance not the appearance chose:
To rescue one such friend he took more pride,
Than to destroy whole thousands of such foes.

But when approach'd, in strict embraces bound,
Rupert and Albemarle together grow;
He joys to have his friend in safety found,
Which he to none but to that friend would owe.

The cheerful soldiers, with new stores supplied,
Now long to execute their spleenful will;
And, in revenge for those three days they tried,
Wish one, like Joshua's, when the sun stood still.

Thus reinforced, against the adverse fleet,
Still doubling ours, brave Rupert leads the way:
With the first blushes of the morn they meet,
And bring night back upon the new-born day.

His presence soon blows up the kindling fight,
And his loud guns speak thick like angry men:
It seem'd as slaughter had been breathed all night,
And death new pointed his dull dart again.

The Dutch too well his mighty conduct knew,
And matchless courage, since the former fight:
Whose navy like a stiff-stretch'd cord did show,
Till he bore in and bent them into flight.

The wind he shares, while half their fleet offends
His open side, and high above him shows:
Upon the rest at pleasure he descends,
And, doubly harm'd, he double harms bestows.

Behind, the general mends his weary pace,
And sullenly to his revenge he sails:
So glides some trodden serpent on the grass,
And long behind his wounded volume trails.

The increasing sound is borne to either shore,
And for their stakes the throwing nations fear:
Their passions double with the cannon's roar,
And with warm wishes each man combats there.

Plied thick and close as when the fight begun,
Their huge unwieldy navy wastes away;
So sicken waning moons too near the sun,
And blunt their crescents on the edge of day.

And now reduced on equal terms to fight,
Their ships like wasted patrimonies show;
Where the thin scattering trees admit the light,
And shun each other's shadows as they grow.

The warlike prince had sever'd from the rest
Two giant ships, the pride of all the main;
Which with his one so vigorously he press'd,
And flew so home they could not rise again.

Already batter'd, by his lee they lay,
In vain upon the passing winds they call:
The passing winds through their torn canvas play,
And flagging sails on heartless sailors fall.

Their open'd sides receive a gloomy light,
Dreadful as day let in to shades below;
Without, grim death rides barefaced in their sight,
And urges entering billows as they flow.

When one dire shot, the last they could supply,
Close by the board the prince's main-mast bore:
All three now helpless by each other lie,
And this offends not, and those fear no more.

So have I seen some fearful hare maintain
A course, till tired before the dog she lay:
Who, stretch'd behind her, pants upon the plain,
Past power to kill, as she to get away.

With his loll'd tongue he faintly licks his prey;
His warm breath blows her flix up as she lies;
She, trembling, creeps upon the ground away,
And looks back to him with beseeching eyes.

The prince unjustly does his stars accuse,
Which hinder'd him to push his fortune on;
For what they to his courage did refuse,
By mortal valour never must be done.

This lucky hour the wise Batavian takes,
And warns his tatter'd fleet to follow home:
Proud to have so got off with equal stakes,
Where 'twas a triumph not to be o'ercome.

The general's force, as kept alive by fight,
Now, not opposed, no longer can pursue:
Lasting till Heaven had done his courage right;
When he had conquer'd he his weakness knew.

He casts a frown on the departing foe,
And sighs to see him quit the watery field;
His stern fix'd eyes no satisfaction show,
For all the glories which the fight did yield.

Though, as when fiends did miracles avow,
He stands confess'd ev'n by the boastful Dutch:
He only does his conquest disavow,
And thinks too little, what they found too much

Return'd, he with the fleet resolved to stay;
No tender thoughts of home his heart divide;
Domestic joys and cares he puts away;
For realms are households which the great must guide.

As those who unripe veins in mines explore,
On the rich bed again the warm turf lay,
Till time digests the yet imperfect ore,
And know it will be gold another day:

So looks our monarch on this early fight,
Th' essay and rudiments of great success:
Which all-maturing time must bring to light,
While he, like Heaven, does each day's labour bless.

Heaven ended not the first or second day,
Yet each was perfect to the work design'd:
God and kings work, when they their work survey,
A passive aptness in all subjects find.

In burden'd vessels first, with speedy care,
His plenteous stores do season'd timber send:
Thither the brawny carpenters repair,
And as the surgeons of maim'd ships attend.

With cord and canvas from rich Hamburgh sent,
His navy's moulted wings he imps once more;
Tall Norway fir, their masts in battle spent,
And English oak, sprung leaks and planks, restore.

All hands employ'd, the royal work grows warm:
Like labouring bees on a long summer's day,
Some sound the trumpet for the rest to swarm,
And some on bells of tasted lilies play.

With gluey wax some new foundations lay
Of virgin combs, which from the roof are hung:
Some arm'd within doors upon duty stay,
Or tend the sick, or educate the young.

So here some pick out bullets from the sides,
Some drive old oakum through each seam and rift:
Their left hand does the calking-iron guide,
The rattling mallet with the right they lift.

With boiling pitch another near at hand,
From friendly Sweden brought, the seams instops:
Which well laid o'er, the salt sea-waves withstand,
And shakes them from the rising beak in drops.

Some the gall'd ropes with dawby marline bind,
Or cere-cloth masts with strong tarpawling coats:
To try new shrouds one mounts into the wind,
And one, below, their ease or stiffness notes.

Our careful monarch stands in person by,
His new-cast cannons' firmness to explore:
The strength of big-corn'd powder loves to try,
And ball and cartridge sorts for every bore.

Each day brings fresh supplies of arms and men,
And ships which all last winter were abroad;
And such as fitted since the fight had been,
Or new from stocks were fall'n into the road.

The goodly London in her gallant trim,
(The phœnix daughter of the vanish'd old,)
Like a rich bride does to the ocean swim,
And on her shadow rides in floating gold.

Her flag aloft spread ruffling to the wind,
And sanguine streamers seem the flood to fire:
The weaver, charm'd with what his loom design'd,
Goes on to sea, and knows not to retire.

With roomy decks, her guns of mighty strength,
Whose low-laid mouths each mounting billow laves:
Deep in her draught, and warlike in her length,
She seems a sea-wasp flying on the waves.

This martial present, piously design'd,
The loyal city give their best-loved king:
And, with a bounty ample as the wind,
Built, fitted, and maintain'd, to aid him bring.

By viewing nature, nature's handmaid, art
Makes mighty things from small beginnings grow;
Thus fishes first to shipping did impart,
Their tail the rudder, and their head the prow.

Some log perhaps upon the waters swam,
An useless drift, which rudely cut within,
And, hollow'd, first a floating trough became,
And 'cross some rivulet passage did begin.

In shipping such as this, the Irish kern,
And untaught Indian, on the stream did glide:
Ere sharp-keel'd boats to stem the flood did learn,
Or fin-like oars did spread from either side.

Add but a sail, and Saturn so appear'd,
When from lost empire he to exile went,
And with the golden age to Tyber steer'd,
Where coin and commerce first he did invent.

Rude as their ships was navigation then;
No useful compass or meridian known;
Coasting, they kept the land within their ken,
And knew no North but when the Pole-star shone.

Of all who since have used the open sea,
Than the bold English none more fame have won:
Beyond the year, and out of heaven's high way,
They make discoveries where they see no sun.

But what so long in vain, and yet unknown,
By poor mankind's benighted wit is sought,
Shall in this age to Britain first be shown,
And hence be to admiring nations taught.

The ebbs of tides and their mysterious flow,
We, as arts' elements, shall understand,
And as by line upon the ocean go,
Whose paths shall be familiar as the land.

Instructed ships shall sail to quick commerce,
By which remotest regions are allied;
Which makes one city of the universe;
Where some may gain, and all may be supplied.

Then we upon our globe's last verge shall go,
And view the ocean leaning on the sky:
From thence our rolling neighbours we shall know,
And on the lunar world securely pry.

This I foretel from your auspicious care,
Who great in search of God and nature grow;
Who best your wise Creator's praise declare,
Since best to praise his works is best to know.

O truly royal! who behold the law
And rule of beings in your Maker's mind:
And thence, like limbecs, rich ideas draw,
To fit the levell'd use of human-kind.

But first the toils of war we must endure,
And from th' injurious Dutch redeem the seas.
War makes the valiant of his right secure,
And gives up fraud to be chastised with ease.

Already were the Belgians on our coast,
Whose fleet more mighty every day became
By late success, which they did falsely boast,
And now by first appearing seem'd to claim.

Designing, subtle, diligent, and close,
They knew to manage war by wise delay:
Yet all those arts their vanity did cross,
And by their pride their prudence did betray.

Nor staid the English long; but well supplied,
Appear as numerous as th' insulting foe:
The combat now by courage must be tried,
And the success the braver nation show.

There was the Plymouth squadron now come in,
Which in the Straits last winter was abroad;
Which twice on Biscay's working bay had been,
And on the midland sea the French had awed.

Old expert Allen, loyal all along,
Famed for his action on the Smyrna fleet:
And Holmes, whose name shall live in epic song,
While music numbers, or while verse has feet.

Holmes, the Achates of the general's fight;
Who first bewitch'd our eyes with Guinea gold:
As once old Cato in the Roman sight
The tempting fruits of Afric did unfold.

With him went Sprag, as bountiful as brave,
Whom his high courage to command had brought:
Harman, who did the twice-fired Harry save,
And in his burning ship undaunted fought.

Young Hollis on a muse by Mars begot,
Born, Cæsar-like, to write and act great deeds:
Impatient to revenge his fatal shot,
His right hand doubly to his left succeeds.

Thousands were there in darker fame that dwell,
Whose deeds some nobler poem shall adorn:
And, though to me unknown, they sure fought well,
Whom Rupert led, and who were British born.

Of every size an hundred fighting sail:
So vast the navy now at anchor rides,
That underneath it the press'd waters fail,
And with its weight it shoulders off the tides.

Now, anchors weigh'd, the seamen shout so shrill,
That heaven, and earth, and the wide ocean rings:
A breeze from westward waits their sails to fill,
And rests in those high beds his downy wings.

The wary Dutch this gathering storm foresaw,
And durst not bide it on the English coast:
Behind their treacherous shallows they withdraw,
And there lay snares to catch the British host.

So the false spider, when her nets are spread,
Deep ambush'd in her silent den does lie;
And feels far off the trembling of her thread,
Whose filmy cord should bind the struggling fly.

Then if at last she find him fast beset,
She issues forth, and runs along her loom:
She joys to touch the captive in her net,
And drag the little wretch in triumph home.

The Belgians hoped, that, with disorder'd haste,
Our deep-cut keels upon the sands might run:
Or, if with caution leisurely were past,
Their numerous gross might charge us one by one.

But with a fore-wind pushing them above,
And swelling tide that heaved them from below,
O'er the blind flats our warlike squadrons move,
And with spread sails to welcome battle go.

It seem'd as there the British Neptune stood,
With all his hosts of waters at command,
Beneath them to submit th' officious flood,
And with his trident shoved them off the sand.

To the pale foes they suddenly draw near,
And summon them to unexpected fight:
They start like murderers when ghosts appear,
And draw their curtains in the dead of night.

Now van to van the foremost squadrons meet,
The midmost battles hasting up behind:
Who view far off the storm of falling sleet,
And hear their thunder rattling in the wind.

At length the adverse admirals appear;
The two bold champions of each country's right:
Their eyes describe the lists as they come near,
And draw the lines of death before they fight.

The distance judged for shot of every size,
The linstocks touch, the ponderous ball expires:
The vigorous seaman every port-hole plies,
And adds his heart to every gun he fires!

Fierce was the fight on the proud Belgians' side,
For honour, which they seldom fought before:
But now they by their own vain boasts were tied,
And forced, at least in show, to prize it more.

But sharp remembrance on the English part,
And shame of being matched by such a foe,
Rouse conscious virtue up in every heart,
And seeming to be stronger makes them so.

Nor long the Belgians could that fleet sustain,
Which did two generals' fates and Cæsar's bear:
Each several ship a victory did gain,
As Rupert or as Albemarle were there.

Their batter'd admiral too soon withdrew,
Unthank'd by ours for his unfinish'd fight:
But he the minds of his Dutch masters knew,
Who call'd that providence which we call'd flight.

Never did mĕn more joyfully obey,
Or sooner understood the sign to fly:
With such alacrity they bore away,
As if to praise them all the States stood by.

O famous leader of the Belgian fleet,
Thy monument inscribed such praise shall wear,
As Varro timely flying once did meet,
Because he did not of his Rome despair.

Behold that navy, which a while before
Provoked the tardy English to the fight;
Now draw their beaten vessels close to shore,
As larks lie dared to shun the hobbies flight.

Whoe'er would English monuments survey,
In other records may our courage know:
But let them hide the story of this day,
Whose fame was blemish'd by too base a foe.

Or if too busily they will inquire
Into a victory, which we disdain;
Then let them know, the Belgians did retire
Before the patron saint of injured Spain.

Repenting England this revengeful day
To Philip's manes did an offering bring:
England, which first, by leading them astray,
Hatch'd up rebellion to destroy her king.

Our fathers bent their baneful industry,
To check a monarchy that slowly grew;
But did not France or Holland's fate foresee,
Whose rising power to swift dominion flew.

In fortune's empire blindly thus we go,
And wander after pathless destiny;
Whose dark resorts since prudence cannot know,
In vain it would provide for what shall be.

But whate'er English to the blest shall go,
And the fourth Harry or first Orange meet;
Find him disowning of a Bourbon foe,
And him detesting a Batavian fleet.

Now on their coasts our conquering navy rides,
Waylays their merchants, and their land besets;
Each day new wealth without their care provides;
They lie asleep with prizes in their nets.

So, close behind some promontory lie
The huge leviathans to attend their prey;
And give no chace, but swallow in the fry,
Which through their gaping jaws mistake the way.

Nor was this all; in ports and roads remote,
Destructive fires among whole fleets we send;
Triumphant flames upon the water float,
And out-bound ships at home their voyage end.

Those various squadrons, variously design'd,
Each vessel freighted with a several load,
Each squadron waiting for a several wind,
All find but one, to burn them in the road.

Some bound for Guinea, golden sand to find,
Bore all the gauds the simple natives wear:
Some, for the pride of Turkish courts design'd,
For folded turbans finest Holland bear.

Some English wool, vex'd in a Belgian loom,
And into cloth of spongy softness made,
Did into France or colder Denmark doom,
To ruin with worse ware our staple trade.

Our greedy seamen rummage every hold,
Smile on the booty of each wealthier chest;
And, as the priests who with their gods make bold,
Take what they like, and sacrifice the rest.

But ah! how insincere are all our joys!
Which sent from heaven, like lightning make no stay:
Their palling taste the journey's length destroys,
Or grief, sent post, o'ertakes them on the way.

Swell'd with our late successes on the foe,
Which France and Holland wanted power to cross,
We urge an unseen fate to lay us low,
And feed their envious eyes with English loss.

Each element his dread command obeys,
Who makes or ruins with a smile or frown;
Who, as by one he did our nation raise,
So now he with another pulls us down.

Yet, London, empress of the northern clime,
By an high fate thou greatly didst expire;
Great as the world's, which at the death of time
Must fall, and rise a nobler frame by fire!

As when some dire usurper heaven provides,
To scourge his country with a lawless sway;
His birth, perhaps, some petty village hides,
And sets his cradle out of fortune's way.

Till fully ripe his swelling fate breaks out,
And hurries him to mighty mischiefs on;
His prince surprised at first no ill could doubt,
And wants the power to meet it when 'tis known.

Such was the rise of this prodigious fire,
Which, in mean buildings first obscurely bred,
From thence did soon to open streets aspire,
And straight to palaces and temples spread.

The diligence of trades and noiseful gain,
And luxury more late, asleep were laid:
All was the night's; and in her silent reign
No sound the rest of nature did invade.

In this deep quiet, from what source unknown,
Those seeds of fire their fatal birth disclose;
And first few scattering sparks about were blown,
Big with the flames that to our ruin rose.

Then in some close-pent room it crept along,
And smouldering as it went, in silence fed;
Till the infant monster, with devouring strong,
Walk'd boldly upright with exalted head.

Now like some rich or mighty murderer,
Too great for prison, which he breaks with gold;
Who fresher for new mischiefs does appear,
And dares the world to tax him with the old:

So 'scapes the insulting fire his narrow jail,
And makes small outlets into open air:
There the fierce winds his tender force assail,
And beat him downward to his first repair.

The winds, like crafty courtezans, withheld
His flames from burning, but to blow them more:
And every fresh attempt he is repell'd
With faint denials weaker than before.

And now, no longer letted of his prey,
He leaps up at it with enraged desire:
O'erlooks the neighbours with a wide survey,
And nods at every house his threatening fire.

The ghosts of traitors from the bridge descend,
With bold fanatick spectres to rejoice:
About the fire into a dance they bend,
And sing their sabbath notes with feeble voice.

Our guardian angel saw them where they sate
Above the palace of our slumbering king;
He sigh'd, abandoning his charge to fate,
And, drooping, oft looked back upon the wing.

At length the crackling noise and dreadful blaze
Call'd up some waking lover to the sight;
And long it was ere he the rest could raise,
Whose heavy eyelids yet were full of night.

The next to danger, hot pursued by fate,
Half-cloth'd, half-naked, hastily retire:
And frighted mothers strike their breasts too late,
For helpless infants left amidst the fire.

Their cries soon waken all the dwellers near;
Now murmuring noises rise in every street;
The more remote run stumbling with their fear,
And in the dark men justle as they meet.

So weary bees in little cells repose;
But if night-robbers lift the well-stored hive,
An humming through their waxen city grows,
And out upon each other's wings they drive.

Now streets grow throng'd and busy as by day:
Some run for buckets to the hallow'd quire:
Some cut the pipes, and some the engines play;
And some more bold mount ladders to the fire.

In vain: for from the East a Belgian wind
His hostile breath through the dry rafters sent;
The flames impell'd soon left their foes behind,
And forward with a wanton fury went.

A key of fire ran all along the shore,
And lighten'd all the river with a blaze:
The waken'd tides began again to roar,
And wondering fish in shining waters gaze.

Old father Thames raised up his reverend head,
But fear'd the fate of Simois would return:
Deep in his ooze he sought his sedgy bed,
And shrunk his waters back into his urn.

The fire, mean time, walks in a broader gross;
To either hand his wings he opens wide:
He wades the streets, and straight he reaches cross,
And plays his longing flames on th' other side.

At first they warm, then scorch, and then they take;
Now with long necks from side to side they feed:
At length, grown strong, their mother-fire forsake,
And a new colony of flames succeed.

To every nobler portion of the town
The curling billows roll their restless tide:
In parties now they straggle up and down,
As armies, unopposed, for prey divide.

One mighty squadron with a side-wind sped,
Through narrow lanes his cumber'd fire does haste,
By powerful charms of gold and silver led,
The Lombard bankers and the 'Change to waste.

Another backward to the Tower would go,
And slowly eats his way against the wind:
But the main body of the marching foe
Against th' imperial palace is design'd.

Now day appears, and with the day the king,
Whose early care had robb'd him of his rest:
Far off the cracks of falling houses ring,
And shrieks of subjects pierce his tender breast.

Near as he draws, thick harbingers of smoke
With gloomy pillars cover all the place;
Whose little intervals of night are broke
By sparks, that drive against his sacred face.

More than his guards his sorrows made him known,
And pious tears which down his cheeks did shower:
The wretched in his grief forgot their own;
So much the pity of a king has power.

He wept the flames of what he loved so well,
And what so well had merited his love:
For never prince in grace did more excel,
Or royal city more in duty strove.

Nor with an idle care did he behold:
Subjects may grieve, but monarchs must redress;
He cheers the fearful and commends the bold,
And makes despairers hope for good success.

Himself directs what first is to be done,
And orders all the succours which they bring:
The helpful and the good about him run,
And form an army worthy such a king.

He sees the dire contagion spread so fast,
That where it seizes, all relief is vain:
And therefore must unwillingly lay waste
That country, which would else the foe maintain.

The powder blows up all before the fire:
Th' amazed flames stand gather'd on a heap;
And from the precipice's brink retire,
Afraid to venture on so large a leap.

Thus fighting fires awhile themselves consume,
But straight like Turks, forced on to win or die,
They first lay tender bridges of their fume,
And o'er the breach in unctuous vapours fly.

Part stays for passage, till a gust of wind
Ships o'er their forces in a shining sheet:
Part creeping under ground their journey blind,
And climbing from below their fellows meet.

Thus to some desert plain, or old wood-side,
Dire night-hags come from far to dance their round;
And o'er broad rivers on their fiends they ride,
Or sweep in clouds above the blasted ground.

No help avails: for, hydra-like, the fire
Lifts up his hundred heads to aim his way:
And scarce the wealthy can one half retire,
Before he rushes in to share the prey.

CHARLES II. AT THE FIRE OF LONDON.

"Himself directs what first is to be done,
And orders all the succours which they bring." P. 58.

The rich grow suppliant, and the poor grow proud:
Those offer mighty gain, and these ask more:
So void of pity is the ignoble crowd,
When others' ruin may increase their store.

As those, who live by shores, with joy behold
Some wealthy vessel split or stranded nigh;
And from the rocks leap down for shipwreck'd gold,
And seek the tempest which the others fly:

So these but wait the owner's last despair,
And what's permitted to the flames invade;
Ev'n from their jaws they hungry morsels tear,
And on their backs the spoils of Vulcan lade.

The days were all in this lost labour spent;
And when the weary king gave place to night,
His beams he to his royal brother lent,
And so shone still in his reflective light.

Night came, but without darkness or repose,
A dismal picture of the general doom;
Where souls distracted when the trumpet blows,
And half unready with their bodies come.

Those who have homes, when home they do repair,
To a last lodging call their wandering friends:
Their short uneasy sleeps are broke with care,
To look how near their own destruction tends.

Those who have none, sit round where once it was,
And with full eyes each wonted room require:
Haunting the yet warm ashes of the place,
As murder'd men walk where they did expire.

Some stir up coals and watch the vestal fire,
Others in vain from sight of ruin run;
And while through burning labyrinths they retire,
With loathing eyes repeat what they would shun.

The most in fields like herded beasts lie down,
To dews obnoxious on the grassy floor;
And while their babes in sleep their sorrows drown,
Sad parents watch the remnants of their store.

While by the motion of the flames they guess
What streets are burning now, and what are near,
An infant waking to the paps would press,
And meets instead of milk, a falling tear.

No thought can ease them but their sovereign's care,
Whose praise the afflicted as their comfort sing:
E'en those whom want might drive to just despair,
Think life a blessing under such a king.

Meantime he sadly suffers in their grief,
Out-weeps an hermit, and out-prays a saint:
All the night long he studies their relief,
How they may be supplied, and he may want.

"O God," said he, "thou patron of my days,
Guide of my youth in exile and distress!
Who me unfriended brought by wond'rous ways,
The kingdom of my fathers to possess:

"Be thou my judge, with what unwearied care
I since have labour'd for my people's good;
To bind the bruises of a civil war,
And stop the issues of their wasting blood.

"Thou, who hast taught me to forgive the ill,
And recompense, as friends, the good misled:
If mercy be a precept of thy will,
Return that mercy on thy servant's head.

"Or if my heedless youth has stept astray,
Too soon forgetful of thy gracious hand;
On me alone thy just displeasure lay,
But take thy judgments from this mourning land.

"We all have sinn'd, and thou hast laid us low,
As humble earth from whence at first we came:
Like flying shades before the clouds we show,
And shrink like parchment in consuming flame.

"O let it be enough what thou hast done;
When spotted deaths ran arm'd through every street,
With poison'd darts which not the good could shun,
The speedy could out-fly, or valiant meet.

"The living few, and frequent funerals then,
Proclaim'd thy wrath on this forsaken place:
And now those few, who are return'd again,
Thy searching judgments to their dwellings trace.

"O pass not, Lord, an absolute decree,
Or bind thy sentence unconditional:
But in thy sentence our remorse foresee,
And in that foresight this thy doom recal.

"Thy threatenings, Lord, as thine thou mayst revoke:
But, if immutable and fix'd they stand,
Continue still thyself to give the stroke,
And let not foreign foes oppress thy land."

The Eternal heard, and from the heavenly quire
Chose out the cherub with the flaming sword;
And bade him swiftly drive th' approaching fire
From where our naval magazines were stored.

The blessed minister his wings display'd,
And like a shooting star he cleft the night:
He charged the flames, and those that disobey'd
He lash'd to duty with his sword of light.

The fugitive flames, chastised, went forth to prey
On pious structures, by our fathers rear'd;
By which to heaven they did affect the way,
Ere faith in churchmen without works was heard.

The wanting orphans saw with watery eyes
Their founders' charity in dust laid low;
And sent to God their ever-answer'd cries,
For he protects the poor who made them so.

Nor could thy fabric, Paul, defend thee long,
Though thou wert sacred to thy Maker's praise:
Though made immortal by a poet's song;
And poets' songs the Theban walls could raise.

The daring flames peep'd in, and saw from far
The awful beauties of the sacred quire:
But, since it was profaned by civil war,
Heaven thought it fit to have it purged by fire.

Now down the narrow streets it swiftly came,
And widely opening did on both sides prey:
This benefit we sadly owe the flame,
If only ruin must enlarge our way.

And now four days the sun had seen our woes:
Four nights the moon beheld th' incessant fire:
It seem'd as if the stars more sickly rose,
And farther from the feverish north retire.

In the empyrean heaven, the bless'd abode,
The thrones and the dominions prostrate lie,
Not daring to behold their angry God;
And an hush'd silence damps the tuneful sky.

At length the Almighty cast a pitying eye,
And mercy softly touch'd his melting breast:
He saw the town's one half in rubbish lie,
And eager flames drive on to storm the rest.

An hollow crystal pyramid he takes,
In firmamental waters dipt above;
Of it a broad extinguisher he makes,
And hoods the flames that to their quarry strove.

The vanquish'd fires withdraw from every place,
Or full with feeding sink into a sleep:
Each household genius shows again his face,
And from the earth the little lares creep.

Our king this more than natural change beholds;
With sober joy his heart and eyes abound:
To the All-good his lifted hands he folds,
And thanks him low on his redeemed ground.

As when sharp frosts had long-constrain'd the earth,
A kindly thaw unlocks it with mild rain;
And first the tender blade peeps up to birth,
And straight the green fields laugh with promised grain:

By such degrees the spreading gladness grew
In every heart which fear had froze before:
The standing streets with so much joy they view,
That with less grief the perish'd they deplore.

The father of the people open'd wide
His stores, and all the poor with plenty fed;
Thus God's anointed God's own place supplied,
And fill'd the empty with his daily bread.

This royal bounty brought its own reward,
And in their minds so deep did print the sense,
That if their ruins sadly they regard,
'Tis but with fear the sight might drive him thence.

But so may he live long, that town to sway,
Which by his auspice they will nobler make,
As he will hatch their ashes by his stay,
And not their humble ruins now forsake.

They have not lost their loyalty by fire;
Nor is their courage or their wealth so low,
That from his wars they poorly would retire,
Or beg the pity of a vanquish'd foe.

Not with more constancy the Jews of old,
By Cyrus from rewarded exile sent,
Their royal city did in dust behold,
Or with more vigour to rebuild it went.

The utmost malice of their stars is past,
And two dire comets, which have scourged the town,
In their own plague and fire have breath'd their last,
Or dimly in their sinking sockets frown.

Now frequent trines the happier lights among,
And high-raised Jove, from his dark prison freed,
Those weights took off that on his planet hung,
Will gloriously the new-laid work succeed.

Methinks already, from his chymic flame,
I see a city of more precious mould:
Rich as the town which gives the Indies name,
With silver paved, and all divine with gold.

Already, labouring with a mighty fate,
She shakes the rubbish from her mounting brow,
And seems to have renew'd her charter's date,
Which heaven will to the death of time allow.

More great than human now, and more august,
Now deified she from her fires does rise:
Her widening streets on new foundations trust,
And, opening, into larger parts she flies.

Before, she like some shepherdess did show,
Who sat to bathe her by a river's side;
Not answering to her fame, but rude and low,
Nor taught the beauteous arts of modern pride.

Now, like a maiden queen, she will behold,
From her high turrets, hourly suitors come:
The East with incense, and the West with gold,
Will stand, like suppliants, to receive her doom.

The silver Thames, her own domestic flood,
Shall bear her vessels like a sweeping train;
And often wind, as of his mistress proud,
With longing eyes to meet her face again.

The wealthy Tagus, and the wealthier Rhine,
The glory of their towns no more shall boast,
And Seine, that would with Belgian rivers join,
Shall find her lustre stain'd, and traffic lost.

The venturous merchant who design'd more far,
And touches on our hospitable shore,
Charm'd with the splendour of this northern star,
Shall here unlade him, and depart no more.

Our powerful navy shall no longer meet,
The wealth of France or Holland to invade:
The beauty of this town, without a fleet,
From all the world shall vindicate her trade.

And, while this famed emporium we prepare,
The British ocean shall such triumphs boast,
That those who now disdain our trade to share,
Shall rob like pirates on our wealthy coast.

Already we have conquer'd half the war,
And the less dangerous part is left behind:
Our trouble now is but to make them dare,
And not so great to vanquish as to find.

Thus to the eastern wealth through storms we go,
But now, the Cape once doubled, fear no more:
A constant trade-wind will securely blow,
And gently lay us on the spicy shore.

ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL.

PART I.

ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL: A POEM PUBLISHED 1681.

THE OCCASION OF IT EXPLAINED.

THE Earl of Shaftesbury seemed bent upon the ruin of the Duke of York. It was mostly through his influence in both houses that those infamous witnesses, Oates, Tongue, Bedloe, &c. were so strenuously encouraged, and the Popish Plot, if not schemed by him, was at least cherished by him and supported. He had been heard to say, with some exultation, *I wont pretend to pronounce who started the game, but I am sure I have had the full hunting.* At this day that plot appears, to impartial and discerning eyes, to have been a forgery contrived to inflame the minds of the

people against popery, a religion now professed by the duke, that the bill for excluding him from the throne might meet with more countenance and greater certainty of success; and it went very near having the desired effect.

The indiscreet zeal and imprudent conduct of the Roman Catholics, for some time past, had given too much room for suspicion; they having often openly, and in defiance of the established laws of the kingdom, shown a thorough contempt for the established religion of their country, propagated as much as possible their own tenets, loudly triumphed in their progress, and daily acquisition of proselytes among all ranks of people, without the least secrecy or caution. Hence was the nation ripe for alarm; when given it spread like wildfire; and the Duke of York, as head of the party at which it was aimed, was obliged to withdraw to Brussels, to avoid the impending storm.

The king being some time after taken ill, produced his highness's sudden return, before his enemies, and those in the opposition to the court-measures, could provide for his reception; so that their schemes were thus for a while disconcerted. Lest his presence might revive commotion, he returned again to Brussels, and was then permitted (previously) to retire to Scotland, having received the strongest assurances of his brother's affection, and resolution to secure him and his heirs the succession. He had before this the satisfaction of seeing the turbulent Earl of Shaftesbury removed from his seat and precedence in the privy council, as well as all share in the ministry; and now prevailed to have the Duke of Monmouth dismissed from all his posts, and sent into Holland.

Shaftesbury's views were to lift Monmouth to the throne, whose weaknesses he knew he could so effectually manage, as to have the reins of government in that case in his own hands. Monmouth was the eldest of the king's sons, by whom he was tenderly beloved. His mother was one Mrs. Lucy Walters, otherwise Barlow, a Pembrokeshire woman, who bore him at Rotterdam, in 1649, and between whom and his Majesty it was artfully reported, there had passed a contract of marriage. This report was narrowly examined into, and proved false, to the full satisfaction of the privy-council, and of the people in general, though Shaftesbury did all in his power to support and establish a belief of its reality. The youth was educated at Paris, under the queen-mother, and brought over to England in 1662: soon after which time he was created Duke of Orkney, in Scotland, and Monmouth in England, or rather Wales; chosen a Knight of the Garter; appointed Master of Horse to his Majesty, General of the land forces, Colonel of the life-guard of horse, Lord-lieutenant of the East Riding of Yorkshire, Governor of Kingston-upon-Hull, Chief Justice in Eyre on the south of the

river Trent, Lord Chamberlain of Scotland, and Duke of Buccleugh, in right of his wife, who was daughter and heiress to a noble and wealthy earl, bearing that name; but he lost all those places of honour and fortune, together with his royal father's favour, by the insinuation and art of Shaftesbury, who poisoned him with illegal and ambitious notions, that ended in his destruction.

The partisans of this earl, and other malcontents, had long pointed out his Grace as a proper successor to the crown, instead of the Duke of York, in case of the king's demise; and he began to believe that he had a real right to be so. At the instigation of his old friend, Shaftesbury, he returned to England without his father's consent, who would not see him; and, instead of obeying the royal mandate to retire again, he and Shaftesbury jointly made a pompous parade through several counties in the west and north of England, scattering the seeds of discord and disaffection; so that their designs seemed to be levelled against the government, and a tempest was gathering at a distance, not unlike that which swept the royal martyr from his throne and life. Many people, who would not otherwise have taken part with the court, shuddering when they looked back upon the scenes of anarchy and confusion that had followed that melancholy catastrophe, in order to prevent the return of a similar storm, attached themselves to the king and the Duke of York; and the latter returned to court, where he kept his ground.

The kingdom was now in a high fermentation; the murmurs of each party broke out into altercation and declamatory abuse. Every day produced new libels and disloyal pamphlets. To answer and expose them, their partisans and abettors, several authors were retained by authority, but none came up to the purpose so well as Sir Roger l'Estrange, in the Observator; and the poet laureat, in the poem under inspection, the elegance and severity of which raised his character prodigiously, and showed the proceedings of Shaftesbury and his followers in a most severe light. These writings, according to Echard, in a great measure stemmed the tide of a popular current, that might have otherwise immersed the nation in ruin. His Grace the Duke of Monmouth afterwards engaged in the Ryehouse Plot, and a reward was offered for the taking him, both by his father and Lewis XIV., whether in England or France. He obtained his pardon both of the king and duke, by two very submissive, nay abject letters; and being admitted to the royal presence, seemed extremely sorry for his past offences, confessed his having engaged in a design for seizing the king's guards, and changing the government, but denied having any knowledge of a scheme for assassinating either his father or uncle, which it seems was set on foot by the inferior ministers of this conspiracy.

Presuming, however, upon the king's paternal affection, he soon recanted his confession, and consorted with his old followers; so that the king forbid him the court, and he retired to Holland, from whence he returned in 1685, raised a rebellion against his uncle, then on the throne, caused himself to be proclaimed king, and being defeated and taken prisoner, was beheaded on Tower Hill, in his thirty-sixth year.—DERRICK.

TO THE READER.

'TIS not my intention to make an apology for my poem: some will think it needs no excuse, and others will receive none. The design I am sure is honest; but he who draws his pen for one party, must expect to make enemies of the other. For wit and fool are consequents of Whig and Tory; and every man is a knave or an ass to the contrary side. There is a treasury of merits in the Fanatic Church, as well as in the Popish; and a pennyworth to be had of saintship, honesty, and poetry, for the lewd, the factious, and the blockheads: but the longest chapter in Deuteronomy has not curses enough for an Anti-Bromingham. My comfort is, their manifest prejudice to my cause will render their judgment of less authority against me. Yet if a poem have a genius, it will force its own reception in the world. For there 's a sweetness in good verse, which tickles even while it hurts; and no man can be heartily angry with him who pleases him against his will. The commendation of adversaries is the greatest triumph of a writer, because it never comes unless extorted. But I can be satisfied on more easy terms: if I happen to please the more moderate sort, I shall be sure of an honest party, and, in all probability, of the best judges; for the least concerned are commonly the least corrupt. And I confess I have laid in for those, by rebating the satire (where justice would allow it), from carrying too sharp an edge. They, who can criticise so weakly as to imagine I have done my worst, may be convinced, at their own cost, that I can write severely, with more ease, than I can gently. I have but laughed at some men's follies, when I could have declaimed against their vices; and other men's virtues I have commended, as freely as I have taxed their crimes. And now, if you are a malicious reader, I expect you should return upon me that I affect to be thought more impartial than I am. But if men are not to be judged by their professions, God forgive you Commonwealth's-men for professing so plausibly for the government. You cannot be so unconscionable as to charge me for not subscribing of my name; for that would reflect too grossly upon your own party, who never

dare, though they have the advantage of a jury to secure them. If you like not my poem, the fault may, possibly, be in my writing (though 'tis hard for an author to judge against himself). But, more probably, 'tis in your morals, which cannot bear the truth of it. The violent, on both sides, will condemn the character of Absalom, as either too favourably or too hardly drawn. But they are not the violent whom I desire to please. The fault on the right hand is to extenuate, palliate, and indulge; and, to confess freely, I have endeavoured to commit it. Besides the respect which I owe his birth, I have a greater for his heroic virtues; and David himself could not be more tender of the young man's life, than I would be of his reputation. But since the most excellent natures are always the most easy, and, as being such, are the soonest perverted by ill counsels, especially when baited with fame and glory; 'tis no more a wonder that he withstood not the temptations of Achitophel, than it was for Adam not to have resisted the two devils, the serpent and the woman. The conclusion of the story I purposely forbore to prosecute, because I could not obtain from myself to show Absalom unfortunate. The frame of it was cut out but for a picture to the waist; and if the draught be so far true, 'tis as much as I designed.

Were I the inventor, who am only the historian, I should certainly conclude the piece with the reconcilement of Absalom to David. And who knows but this may come to pass? Things were not brought to an extremity where I left the story: there seems yet to be room left for a composure; hereafter there may be only for pity. I have not so much as an uncharitable wish against Achitophel, but am content to be accused of a good-natured error, and to hope with Origen, that the devil himself may at last be saved. For which reason, in this poem, he is neither brought to set his house in order, nor to dispose of his person afterwards as he in his wisdom shall think fit. God is infinitely merciful; and his vicegerent is only not so, because he is not infinite.

The true end of satire is the amendment of vices by correction. And he who writes honestly, is no more an enemy to the offender, than the physician to the patient, when he prescribes harsh remedies to an inveterate disease; for those are only in order to prevent the chirurgeon's work of an *Ense recidendum*, which I wish not to my very enemies. To conclude all; if the body politic have any analogy to the natural, in my weak judgment, an act of oblivion were as necessary in a hot distempered state, as an opiate would be in a raging fever.

CHARACTERS REPRESENTED.

ABDAEL, General Monk, Duke of Albemarle.
ABETHDIN, The name given, through this Poem, to a Lord Chancellor in general.
ABSALOM, Duke of Monmouth, natural son of Charles II.
ACHITOPHEL, The Earl of Shaftesbury.
ADRIEL, Earl of Mulgrave.
AGAG, Sir Edmondbury Godfrey.
AMIEL, Sir Edward Seymour, Speaker of the House of Commons
AMRI, Sir Heneage Finch, Earl of Winchelsea, and Lord Chancellor.
ANNABEL, Anne, Duchess of Monmouth.
AROD, Sir William Waller.
ASAPH, A Character drawn by Tate for Dryden, in the Second Part of this Poem.
BALAAM, Earl of Huntingdon.
BALAK, Barnet.
BARZILLAI, Duke of Ormond.
BATHSHEBA, Duchess of Portsmouth.
BENAIAH, General Sackville.
BEN JOCHANAN, Rev. Samuel Johnson.
BEZALIEL, Duke of Beaufort.
CALEB, Lord Grey.
CORAH, Titus Oates.
DAVID, Charles II.
DOEG, Elkanah Settle, the City Poet.
EGYPT, France.
ELIAB, Sir Henry Bennet, Earl of Arlington.
ETHNIC PLOT, the Popish Plot.
GATH, The Land of Exile, more particularly Brussels, where King Charles II. long resided.
HEBRON, Scotland.
HEBREW PRIESTS, The Church of England Clergy.
HELON, Earl of Feversham.
HUSHAI, Laurence Hyde, Earl of Rochester.
JEBUSITES, Papists.
JERUSALEM, London.
JEWS, English.
JONAS, Sir William Jones, a great Lawyer.
JORDAN, Dover.
JOTHAM, Marquis of Halifax.
JOTHRAN, Lord Dartmouth.
ISHBOSHETH, Richard Cromwell.
ISRAEL, England.
ISSACHAR, Thomas Thynne, Esq. of Longleat.
JUDAS, Robert Ferguson, a Scotch Independent Preacher.
ISHBAN, Sir Robert Clayton. a London Alderman.
MEPHIBOSHETH, Pordage.
MICHAL, Queen Catharine.
NADAB, Lord Howard of Escrick.
OG, Shadwell, the Dramatist.
OTHNIEL, Henry, Duke of Grafton.
PHALEG, Forbes.
PHARAOH, King of France.
RABSHEKA, Sir Thomas Player.
HAGAR OF JERUSALEM, Dr. Compton, Bishop of London.
SANHEDRIM, Parliament.
SAUL, Oliver Cromwell.
SHIMEI, Slingsby Bethel, Sheriff of London in 1680.
SHEVA, Sir Roger L'Estrange.
SOLYMEAN ROUT, London Rebels.
TYRE, Holland.
UZZA, Jack Hall.
ZADOC, Sancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury.
ZAKEN, A Member of the House of Commons.
ZIMRI, George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham.
ZILOAH, Sir John Moor, Lord Mayor in 1681.

ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL.

In pious times ere priestcraft did begin,
Before polygamy was made a sin;
When man on many multiplied his kind,
Ere one to one was cursedly confined;
When nature prompted, and no law denied
Promiscuous use of concubine and bride;
Then Israel's monarch after Heaven's own heart,
His vigorous warmth did variously impart
To wives and slaves; and wide as his command,
Scatter'd his Maker's image through the land.
Michal, of royal blood, the crown did wear;
A soil ungrateful to the tiller's care:
Not so the rest; for several mothers bore
To god-like David several sons before:
But since like slaves his bed they did ascend,
No true succession could their seed attend.
Of all this numerous progeny was none
So beautiful, so brave, as Absalom:
Whether, inspired by some diviner lust,
His father got him with a greater gust:
Or that his conscious destiny made way,
By manly beauty, to imperial sway.
Early, in foreign fields, he won renown
With kings and states allied to Israel's crown:
In peace the thoughts of war he could remove,
And seem'd as he were only born for love.
Whate'er he did, was done with so much ease,
In him alone 'twas natural to please:
His motions all accompanied with grace;
And paradise was open'd in his face.
With secret joy indulgent David view'd
His youthful image in his son renew'd:
To all his wishes nothing he denied;
And made the charming Annabel his bride.
What faults he had, (for who from faults is free?)
His father could not, or he would not see.
Some warm excesses which the law forbore,
Were construed youth that purged by boiling o'er,
And Amnon's murder, by a specious name,
Was call'd a just revenge for injured fame.
Thus praised and loved, the noble youth remained,
While David, undisturbed, in Sion reigned.

But life can never be sincerely blest:
Heaven punishes the bad, and proves the best.
The Jews, a headstrong, moody, murmuring race,
As ever tried the extent and stretch of grace;
God's pamper'd people, whom debauch'd with ease,
No king could govern, nor no God could please;
(Gods they had tried of every shape and size,
That god-smiths could produce, or priests devise:)
These Adam-wits, too fortunately free,
Began to dream they wanted liberty;
And when no rule, no precedent was found,
Of men, by laws less circumscribed and bound;
They led their wild desires to woods and caves,
And thought that all but savages were slaves.
They who, when Saul was dead, without a blow,
Made foolish Ishbosheth the crown forego;
Who banish'd David did from Hebron bring,
And with a general shout proclaim'd him king:
Those very Jews, who, at their very best,
Their humour more than loyalty express'd,
Now wonder'd why so long they had obey'd
An idol monarch, which their hands had made;
Thought they might ruin him they could create,
Or melt him to that golden calf, a state.
But these were random bolts: no form'd design,
Nor interest made the factious crowd to join:
The sober part of Israel, free from stain,
Well knew the value of a peaceful reign;
And, looking backward with a wise affright,
Saw seams of wounds dishonest to the sight:
In contemplation of whose ugly scars,
They cursed the memory of civil wars.
The moderate sort of men thus qualified,
Inclined the balance to the better side;
And David's mildness managed it so well,
The bad found no occasion to rebel.
But when to sin our biass'd nature leans,
The careful devil is still at hand with means;
And providently pimps for ill desires:
The good old cause revived a plot requires.
Plots, true or false, are necessary things,
To raise up commonwealths, and ruin kings.
The inhabitants of old Jerusalem
Were Jebusites; the town so call'd from them;

And theirs the native right——
But when the chosen people grew more strong,
The rightful cause at length became the wrong;
And every loss the men of Jebus bore,
They still were thought God's enemies the more.
Thus worn or weaken'd, well or ill content,
Submit they must to David's government:
Impoverish'd and deprived of all command,
Their taxes doubled as they lost their land;
And what was harder yet to flesh and blood.
Their gods disgraced, and burnt like common wood,
This set the heathen priesthood in a flame;
For priests of all religions are the same.
Of whatsoe'er descent their godhead be,
Stock, stone, or other homely pedigree,
In his defence his servants are as bold,
As if he had been born of beaten gold.
The Jewish rabbins, though their enemies,
In this conclude them honest men and wise:
For 'twas their duty, all the learned think,
To espouse his cause, by whom they eat and drink.
From hence began that plot, the nation's curse,
Bad in itself, but represented worse;
Raised in extremes, and in extremes decried;
With oaths affirm'd, with dying vows denied;
Not weigh'd nor winnow'd by the multitude;
But swallowed in the mass, unchew'd and crude.
Some truth there was, but dash'd and brew'd with lies,
To please the fools, and puzzle all the wise.
Succeeding times did equal folly call,
Believing nothing, or believing all.
The Egyptian rites the Jebusites embraced;
Where gods were recommended by their taste.
Such savoury deities must needs be good,
As served at once for worship and for food.
By force they could not introduce these gods;
For ten to one in former days was odds.
So fraud was used, the sacrificer's trade:
Fools are more hard to conquer than persuade.
Their busy teachers mingled with the Jews,
And raked for converts even the court and stews:
Which Hebrew priests the more unkindly took,
Because the fleece accompanies the flock.

Some thought they God's anointed meant to slay
By guns, invented since full many a day:
Our author swears it not; but who can know
How far the devil and Jebusites may go?
This plot, which fail'd for want of common sense,
Had yet a deep and dangerous consequence:
For as when raging fevers boil the blood,
The standing lake soon floats into a flood,
And every hostile humour, which before
Slept quiet in its channels, bubbles o'er;
So several factions from this first ferment,
Work up to foam, and threat the government.
Some by their friends, more by themselves thought wise,
Opposed the power to which they could not rise.
Some had in courts been great, and thrown from thence,
Like fiends were harden'd in impenitence.
Some, by their monarch's fatal mercy, grown
From pardon'd rebels kinsmen to the throne,
Were raised in power and public office high;
Strong bands, if bands ungrateful men could tie.
Of these the false Achitophel was first;
A name to all succeeding ages cursed:
For close designs, and crooked counsels fit;
Sagacious, bold, and turbulent of wit;
Restless, unfix'd in principles and place;
In power unpleased, impatient of disgrace:
A fiery soul, which, working out its way,
Fretted the pigmy-body to decay,
And o'er-inform'd the tenement of clay.
A daring pilot in extremity;
Pleased with the danger, when the waves went high
He sought the storms; but, for a calm unfit,
Would steer too nigh the sands to boast his wit.
Great wits are sure to madness near allied,
And thin partitions do their bounds divide;
Else why should he, with wealth and honour blest,
Refuse his age the needful hours of rest?
Punish a body which he could not please;
Bankrupt of life, yet prodigal of ease?
And all to leave what with his toil he won,
To that unfeather'd two-legg'd thing, a son;
Got, while his soul did huddled notions try;
And born a shapeless lump, like anarchy.

In friendship false, implacable in hate;
Resolved to ruin or to rule the state.
To compass this the triple bond he broke;
The pillars of the public safety shook;
And fitted Israel for a foreign yoke:
Then seized with fear, yet still affecting fame,
Usurp'd a patriot's all-atoning name.
So easy still it proves, in factious times,
With public zeal to cancel private crimes.
How safe is treason, and how sacred ill,
Where none can sin against the people's will!
Where crowds can wink, and no offence be known,
Since in another's guilt they find their own!
Yet fame deserved no enemy can grudge;
The statesman we abhor, but praise the judge.
In Israel's courts ne'er sat an Abethdin
With more discerning eyes, or hands more clean,
Unbribed, unsought, the wretched to redress;
Swift of dispatch, and easy of access.
Oh! had he been content to serve the crown,
With virtues only proper to the gown;
Or had the rankness of the soil been freed
From cockle, that oppress'd the noble seed;
David for him his tuneful harp had strung,
And heaven had wanted one immortal song.
But wild Ambition loves to slide, not stand,
And Fortune's ice prefers to Virtue's land.
Achitophel, grown weary to possess
A lawful fame, and lazy happiness,
Disdain'd the golden fruit to gather free,
And lent the crowd his arm to shake the tree.
Now, manifest of crimes contrived long since,
He stood at bold defiance with his prince;
Held up the buckler of the people's cause
Against the crown, and sculk'd behind the laws.
The wish'd occasion of the plot he takes;
Some circumstances finds, but more he makes.
By buzzing emissaries fills the ears
Of listening crowds with jealousies and fears
Of arbitrary counsels brought to light,
And proves the king himself a Jebusite.
Weak arguments! which yet he knew full well,
Were strong with people easy to rebel.

For, govern'd by the moon, the giddy Jews
Tread the same track when she the prime renews;
And once in twenty years, their scribes record,
By natural instinct they change their lord.
Achitophel still wants a chief, and none
Was found so fit as warlike Absalom.
Not that he wish'd his greatness to create,
For politicians neither love nor hate:
But, for he knew his title not allow'd,
Would keep him still depending on the crowd:
That kingly power, thus ebbing out, might be
Drawn to the dregs of a democracy.
Him he attempts with studied arts to please,
And sheds his venom in such words as these:
'Auspicious prince, at whose nativity
Some royal planet ruled the southern sky;
Thy longing country's darling and desire;
Their cloudy pillar and their guardian fire:
Their second Moses, whose extended wand
Divides the seas, and shows the promised land:
Whose dawning day, in every distant age,
Has exercised the sacred prophet's rage:
The people's prayer, the glad diviner's theme,
The young men's vision, and the old men's dream!
Thee, Saviour, thee the nation's vows confess,
And, never satisfied with seeing, bless:
Swift unbespoken pomps thy steps proclaim,
And stammering babes are taught to lisp thy name:
How long wilt thou the general joy detain,
Starve and defraud the people of thy reign!
Content ingloriously to pass thy days,
Like one of virtue's fools that feed on praise;
Till thy fresh glories, which now shine so bright,
Grow stale, and tarnish with our daily sight!
Believe me, royal youth, thy fruit must be
Or gather'd ripe, or rot upon the tree.
Heaven has to all allotted, soon or late,
Some lucky revolution of their fate:
Whose motions if we watch and guide with skill,
(For human good depends on human will,)
Our fortune rolls as from a smooth descent,
And from the first impression takes the bent:
But, if unseized, she glides away like wind,
And leaves repenting folly far behind.

Now, now she meets you with a glorious prize,
And spreads her locks before her as she flies.
Had thus old David, from whose loins you spring,
Not dared when fortune call'd him to be king,
At Gath an exile he might still remain,
And Heaven's anointing oil had been in vain.
Let his successful youth your hopes engage;
But shun the example of declining age:
Behold him setting in his western skies,
The shadows lengthening as the vapours rise.
He is not now, as when on Jordan's sand
The joyful people throng'd to see him land,
Covering the beach, and blackening all the strand;
But, like the prince of angels, from his height
Comes tumbling downward with diminish'd light:
Betray'd by one poor plot to public scorn:
(Our only blessing since his cursed return:)
Those heaps of people which one sheaf did bind,
Blown off and scatter'd by a puff of wind.
What strength can he to your designs oppose,
Naked of friends and round beset with foes?
If Pharaoh's doubtful succour he should use,
A foreign aid would more incense the Jews:
Proud Egypt would dissembled friendship bring,
Foment the war, but not support the king:
Nor would the royal party e'er unite
With Pharaoh's arms to assist the Jebusite;
Or if they should, their interest soon would break,
And with such odious aid make David weak.
All sorts of men by my successful arts,
Abhorring kings, estrange their alter'd hearts
From David's rule: and 'tis their general cry,
Religion, commonwealth, and liberty.
If you, as champion of the public good,
Add to their arms a chief of royal blood,
What may not Israel hope, and what applause
Might such a general gain by such a cause?
Not barren praise alone, that gaudy flower
Fair only to the sight, but solid power:
And nobler is a limited command,
Given by the love of all your native land,
Than a successive title, long and dark,
Drawn from the mouldy rolls of Noah's ark.'

What cannot praise effect in mighty minds,
When flattery soothes, and when ambition blinds?
Desire of power, on earth a vicious weed,
Yet sprung from high is of celestial seed:
In God 'tis glory; and when men aspire,
'Tis but a spark too much of heavenly fire.
The ambitious youth too covetous of fame,
Too full of angels' mettle in his frame,
Unwarily was led from virtue's ways,
Made drunk with honour, and debauch'd with praise;
Half loth, and half consenting to the ill,
For royal blood within him struggled still,
He thus replied:—'And what pretence have I
To take up arms for public liberty?
My father governs with unquestion'd right;
The faith's defender, and mankind's delight;
Good, gracious, just, observant of the laws;
And Heaven by wonders has espoused his cause.
Whom has he wrong'd in all his peaceful reign?
Who sues for justice to his throne in vain?
What millions has he pardon'd of his foes,
Whom just revenge did to his wrath expose?
Mild, easy, humble, studious of our good;
Inclined to mercy, and averse from blood.
If mildness ill with stubborn Israel suit,
His crime is God's beloved attribute.
What could he gain his people to betray,
Or change his right for arbitrary sway?
Let haughty Pharaoh curse with such a reign
His fruitful Nile, and yoke a servile train.
If David's rule Jerusalem displease,
The dog-star heats their brains to this disease.
Why then should I, encouraging the bad,
Turn rebel and run popularly mad?
Were he a tyrant, who, by lawless might
Oppress'd the Jews and raised the Jebusite,
Well might I mourn; but nature's holy bands
Would curb my spirit and restrain my hands:
The people might assert their liberty;
But what was right in them were crime in me.
His favour leaves me nothing to require,
Prevents my wishes, and out-runs desire;
What more can I expect while David lives?
All but his kingly diadem he gives:

And that'—But there he paused; then sighing, said—
'Is justly destined for a worthier head.
For when my father from his toils shall rest,
And late augment the number of the blest,
His lawful issue shall the throne ascend,
Or the collateral line, where that shall end.
His brother, though oppress'd with vulgar spite,
Yet dauntless, and secure of native right,
Of every royal virtue stands possess'd;
Still dear to all the bravest and the best:
His courage foes, his friends his truth proclaim,
His loyalty the king, the world his fame:
His mercy e'en the offending crowd will find;
For sure he comes of a forgiving kind.
Why should I then repine at Heaven's decree,
Which gives me no pretence to royalty?
Yet, oh that fate, propitiously inclined,
Had raised my birth, or had debased my mind;
To my large soul not all her treasure lent,
And then betray'd it to a mean descent!
I find, I find my mounting spirits bold,
And David's part disdains my mother's mould.
Why am I scanted by a niggard birth?
My soul disclaims the kindred of her earth;
And, made for empire, whispers me within,
Desire of greatness is a god-like sin.'

Him staggering so, when hell's dire agent found,
While fainting virtue scarce maintain'd her ground,
He pours fresh forces in, and thus replies:

'The eternal God, supremely good and wise,
Imparts not these prodigious gifts in vain:
What wonders are reserved to bless your reign!
Against your will, your arguments have shown,
Such virtue 's only given to guide a throne.
Not that your father's mildness I contemn;
But manly force becomes the diadem.
'Tis true he grants the people all they crave;
And, more, perhaps, than subjects ought to have:
For lavish grants suppose a monarch tame,
And more his goodness than his wit proclaim.
But when should people strive their bonds to break,
If not when kings are negligent or weak?
Let him give on till he can give no more,
The thrifty Sanhedrim shall keep him poor;

And every shekel which he can receive
Shall cost a limb of his prerogative.
To ply him with new plots shall be my care;
Or plunge him deep in some expensive war;
Which when his treasure can no more supply,
He must, with the remains of kingship, buy
His faithful friends, our jealousies and fears
Call Jebusites and Pharaoh's pensioners,
Whom when our fury from his aid has torn,
He shall be naked left to public scorn.
The next successor, whom I fear and hate,
My arts have made obnoxious to the state;
Turn'd all his virtues to his overthrow,
And gained our elders to pronounce a foe.
His right, for sums of necessary gold,
Shall first be pawn'd, and afterwards be sold;
Till time shall ever-wanting David draw,
To pass your doubtful title into law;
If not, the people have a right supreme
To make their kings; for kings are made for them.
All empire is no more than power in trust,
Which, when resumed, can be no longer just.
Succession, for the general good design'd,
In its own wrong a nation cannot bind:
If altering that the people can relieve,
Better one suffer than a million grieve.
The Jews well know their power: ere Saul they chose,
God was their king, and God they durst depose.
Urge now your piety, your filial name,
A father's right, and fear of future fame;
The public good, that universal call,
To which e'en Heaven submitted, answers all.
Nor let his love enchant your generous mind;
'Tis nature's trick to propagate her kind.
Our fond begetters, who would never die,
Love but themselves in their posterity.
Or let his kindness by the effects be tried,
Or let him lay his vain pretence aside.
God said, he loved your father; could he bring
A better proof, than to anoint him king?
It surely show'd he loved the shepherd well,
Who gave so fair a flock as Israel.
Would David have you thought his darling son?
What means he then to alienate the crown?

The name of godly he may blush to bear:
Is't after God's own heart to cheat his heir?
He to his brother gives supreme command,
To you a legacy of barren land;
Perhaps the old harp, on which he thrums his lays,
Or some dull Hebrew ballad in your praise.
Then the next heir, a prince severe and wise,
Already looks on you with jealous eyes;
Sees through the thin disguises of your arts,
And marks your progress in the people's hearts;
Though now his mighty soul its grief contains:
He meditates revenge who least complains;
And like a lion, slumbering in the way,
Or sleep dissembling, while he waits his prey,
His fearless foes within his distance draws,
Constrains his roaring, and contracts his paws;
Till, at the last, his time for fury found,
He shoots with sudden vengeance from the ground;
The prostrate vulgar passes o'er and spares,
But with a lordly rage his hunters tears.
Your case no tame expedients will afford:
Resolve on death, or conquest by the sword,
Which for no less a stake than life you draw;
And self-defence is nature's eldest law.
Leave the warm people no considering time,
For then rebellion may be thought a crime.
Avail yourself of what occasion gives,
But try your title while your father lives:
And, that your arms may have a fair pretence,
Proclaim you take them in the king's defence;
Whose sacred life each minute would expose
To plots, from seeming friends, and secret foes.
And who can sound the depth of David's soul?
Perhaps his fear his kindness may control.
He fears his brother, though he loves his son,
For plighted vows too late to be undone.
If so, by force he wishes to be gain'd:
Like women's lechery to seem constrain'd.
Doubt not: but, when he most affects the frown,
Commit a pleasing rape upon the crown.
Secure his person to secure your cause:
They who possess the prince possess the laws.'
He said, and this advice above the rest,
With Absalom's mild nature suited best;

Unblamed for life, ambition set aside,
Not stain'd with cruelty, nor puff'd with pride.
How happy had he been, if destiny
Had higher placed his birth, or not so high!
His kingly virtues might have claim'd a throne,
And bless'd all other countries but his own.
But charming greatness since so few refuse,
'Tis juster to lament him than accuse.
Strong were his hopes a rival to remove,
With blandishments to gain the public love:
To head the faction while their zeal was hot,
And popularly prosecute the plot.
To further this, Achitophel unites
The malcontents of all the Israelites:
Whose differing parties he could wisely join,
For several ends, to serve the same design.
The best, and of the princes some were such,
Who thought the power of monarchy too much;
Mistaken men, and patriots in their hearts;
Not wicked, but seduced by impious arts.
By these the springs of property were bent,
And wound so high, they crack'd the government.
The next for interest sought to embroil the state,
To sell their duty at a dearer rate;
And make their Jewish markets of the throne;
Pretending public good to serve their own.
Others thought kings an useless heavy load,
Who cost too much, and did too little good.
These were for laying honest David by,
On principles of pure good husbandry.
With them join'd all the haranguers of the throng
That thought to get preferment by the tongue.
Who follow next a double danger bring,
Not only hating David, but the king;
The Solymæan rout; well versed of old,
In godly faction, and in treason bold;
Cowering and quaking at a conqueror's sword,
But lofty to a lawful prince restored;
Saw with disdain an Ethnic plot begun,
And scorn'd by Jebusites to be outdone.
Hot Levites headed these; who pull'd before
From the ark, which in the Judges' days they bore,
Resumed their cant, and with a zealous cry,
Pursued their old beloved Theocracy:

Where Sanhedrim and priest enslaved the nation,
And justified their spoils by inspiration:
For who so fit to reign as Aaron's race,
If once dominion they could found in grace!
These led the pack; though not of surest scent,
Yet deepest mouth'd against the government.
A numerous host of dreaming saints succeed,
Of the true old enthusiastic breed:
'Gainst form and order they their power employ,
Nothing to build, and all things to destroy.
But far more numerous was the herd of such,
Who think too little, and who talk too much.
These out of mere instinct, they knew not why,
Adored their fathers' God and property;
And by the same blind benefit of fate,
The devil and the Jebusite did hate:
Born to be saved, even in their own despite,
Because they could not help believing right.
Such were the tools: but a whole Hydra more
Remains of sprouting heads too long to score.
Some of their chiefs were princes of the land;
In the first rank of these did Zimri stand;
A man so various, that he seem'd to be
Not one, but all mankind's epitome:
Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong;
Was every thing by starts, and nothing long;
But, in the course of one revolving moon,
Was chymist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon:
Then all for women, painting, rhyming, drinking,
Besides ten thousand freaks that died in thinking.
Blest madman, who could every hour employ,
With something new to wish, or to enjoy!
Railing and praising were his usual themes;
And both, to show his judgment, in extremes:
So over-violent, or over-civil,
That every man with him was God or Devil.
In squandering wealth was his peculiar art;
Nothing went unrewarded but desert.
Beggar'd by fools, whom still he found too late;
He had his jest, and they had his estate.
He laugh'd himself from court, then sought relief
By forming parties, but could ne'er be chief:
For, spite of him, the weight of business fell
On Absalom, and wise Achitophel:

Thus, wicked but in will, of means bereft,
He left no faction, but of that was left.
Titles and names 'twere tedious to rehearse
Of lords, below the dignity of verse.
Wits, warriors, commonwealth's-men, were the best:
Kind husbands, and mere nobles, all the rest.
And therefore, in the name of dulness, be
The well-hung Balaam and cold Caleb, free:
And canting Nadab let oblivion damn,
Who made new porridge for the paschal lamb.
Let friendship's holy band some names assure;
Some their own worth, and some let scorn secure.
Nor shall the rascal rabble here have place,
Whom kings no titles gave, and God no grace:
Not bull-faced Jonas, who could statutes draw
To mean rebellion, and make treason law.
But he, though bad, is follow'd by a worse,
The wretch who Heaven's anointed dared to curse;
Shimei, whose youth did early promise bring
Of zeal to God and hatred to his king;
Did wisely from expensive sins refrain,
And never broke the sabbath—but for gain:
Nor ever was he known an oath to vent,
Or curse, unless against the government.
Thus heaping wealth, by the most ready way
Among the Jews—which was to cheat and pray:
The city, to reward his pious hate
Against his master, chose him magistrate.
His hand a staff of justice did uphold;
His neck was loaded with a chain of gold.
During his office, treason was no crime;
The sons of Belial had a glorious time:
For Shimei, though not prodigal of pelf,
Yet loved his wicked neighbour as himself.
When two or three were gather'd to declaim
Against the monarch of Jerusalem,
Shimei was always in the midst of them:
And if they cursed the king when he was by,
Would rather curse than break good company.
If any durst his factious friends accuse,
He pack'd a jury of dissenting Jews;
Whose fellow-feeling in the godly cause
Would free the suffering saint from human laws.

For laws are only made to punish those
Who serve the king, and to protect his foes.
If any leisure time he had from power,
(Because 'tis sin to misemploy an hour,)
His business was, by writing to persuade,
That kings were useless, and a clog to trade:
And, that his noble style he might refine,
No Rechabite more shunn'd the fumes of wine.
Chaste were his cellars, and his shrieval board
The grossness of a city feast abhorr'd:
His cooks with long disuse their trade forgot;
Cool was his kitchen, though his brains were hot
Such frugal virtue, malice may accuse;
But sure 'twas necessary to the Jews:
For towns, once burnt, such magistrates require
As dare not tempt God's providence by fire.
With spiritual food he fed his servants well,
But free from flesh that made the Jews rebel:
And Moses' laws he held in more account,
For forty days of fasting in the mount.
To speak the rest who better are forgot,
Would tire a well-breathed witness of the plot.
Yet Corah, thou shalt from oblivion pass;
Erect thyself, thou monumental brass,
High as the serpent of thy metal made,
While nations stand secure beneath thy shade.
What, though his birth were base, yet comets rise
From earthly vapours, ere they shine in skies.
Prodigious actions may as well be done
By weaver's issue, as by prince's son.
This arch-attestor for the public good,
By that one deed ennobles all his blood.
Who ever asked the witness's high race,
Whose oath with martyrdom did Stephen grace?
Ours was a Levite, and as times went then,
His tribe were God Almighty's gentlemen.
Sunk were his eyes, his voice was harsh and loud,
Sure signs he neither choleric was, nor proud:
His long chin proved his wit; his saint-like grace
A church-vermilion, and a Moses' face.
His memory, miraculously great,
Could plots, exceeding man's belief, repeat;
Which therefore cannot be accounted lies,
For human wit could never such devise.

Some future truths are mingled in his book;
But where the witness fail'd, the prophet spoke:
Some things like visionary flights appear;
The spirit caught him up, the Lord knows where;
And gave him his rabbinical degree,
Unknown to foreign university.
His judgment yet his memory did excel;
Which pieced his wondrous evidence so well,
And suited to the temper of the times,
Then groaning under Jebusitic crimes.
Let Israel's foes suspect his heavenly call,
And rashly judge his writ apocryphal;
Our laws for such affronts have forfeits made:
He takes his life, who takes away his trade.
Were I myself in witness Corah's place,
The wretch who did me such a dire disgrace,
Should whet my memory, though once forgot,
To make him an appendix of my plot.
His zeal to Heaven made him his prince despise,
And load his person with indignities.
But zeal peculiar privilege affords,
Indulging latitude to deeds and words:
And Corah might for Agag's murder call,
In terms as coarse as Samuel used to Saul.
What others in his evidence did join,
The best that could be had for love or coin,
In Corah's own predicament will fall:
For witness is a common name to all.
Surrounded thus with friends of every sort,
Deluded Absalom forsakes the court:
Impatient of high hopes, urged with renown,
And fired with near possession of a crown.
The admiring crowd are dazzled with surprise,
And on his goodly person feed their eyes.
His joy conceal'd, he sets himself to show;
On each side bowing popularly low;
His looks, his gestures, and his words he frames,
And with familiar ease repeats their names.
Thus form'd by nature, furnish'd out with arts,
He glides unfelt into their secret hearts.
Then, with a kind compassionating look,
And sighs, bespeaking pity ere he spoke,
Few words he said; but easy those and fit,
More slow than Hybla-drops, and far more sweet.

I mourn, my countrymen, your lost estate;
Though far unable to prevent your fate:
Behold a banish'd man for your dear cause
Exposed a prey to arbitrary laws!
Yet, oh! that I alone could be undone,
Cut off from empire, and no more a son!
Now all your liberties a spoil are made;
Egypt and Tyrus intercept your trade,
And Jebusites your sacred rites invade.
My father, whom with reverence yet I name,
Charm'd into ease, is careless of his fame;
And, bribed with petty sums of foreign gold,
Is grown in Bathsheba's embraces old;
Exalts his enemies, his friends destroys;
And all his power against himself employs.
He gives, and let him give, my right away:
But why should he his own and your's betray?
He, only he, can make the nation bleed,
And he alone from my revenge is freed.
Take then my tears, (with that he wiped his eyes,)
'Tis all the aid my present power supplies:
No court-informer can these arms accuse;
These arms may sons against their fathers use:
And 'tis my wish, the next successor's reign
May make no other Israelite complain.

Youth, beauty, graceful action seldom fail;
But common interest always will prevail:
And pity never ceases to be shown
To him who makes the people's wrongs his own.
The crowd, that still believe their kings oppress,
With lifted hands their young Messiah bless:
Who now begins his progress to ordain
With chariots, horsemen, and a numerous train:
From east to west his glories he displays,
And, like the sun, the promised land surveys.
Fame runs before him as the morning-star,
And shouts of joy salute him from afar:
Each house receives him as a guardian god,
And consecrates the place of his abode.
But hospitable treats did most commend
Wise Issachar, his wealthy western friend.
This moving court, that caught the people's eyes,
And seem'd but pomp, did other ends disguise:

Achitophel had form'd it, with intent
To sound the depths, and fathom where it went
The people's hearts, distinguish friends from foes;
And try their strength, before they came to blows.
Yet all was colour'd with a smooth pretence
Of specious love and duty to their prince.
Religion, and redress of grievances,
Two names that always cheat, and always please,
Are often urged; and good king David's life
Endanger'd by a brother and a wife.
Thus in a pageant show, a plot is made;
And peace itself is war in masquerade.
Oh, foolish Israel! never warn'd by ill!
Still the same bait, and circumvented still!
Did ever men forsake their present ease,
In midst of health imagine a disease;
Take pains contingent mischiefs to foresee,
Make heirs for monarchs, and for God decree?
What shall we think? Can people give away,
Both for themselves and sons, their native sway?
Then they are left defenceless to the sword
Of each unbounded, arbitrary lord:
And laws are vain, by which we right enjoy,
If kings unquestion'd can those laws destroy.
Yet if the crowd be judge of fit and just,
And kings are only officers in trust,
Then this resuming covenant was declared
When kings were made, or is for ever barr'd.
If those who gave the sceptre could not tie
By their own deed their own posterity,
How then could Adam bind his future race?
How could his forfeit on mankind take place?
Or how could heavenly justice damn us all,
Who ne'er consented to our father's fall?
Then kings are slaves to those whom they command,
And tenants to their people's pleasure stand.
Add, that the power for property allow'd
Is mischievously seated in the crowd:
For who can be secure of private right,
If sovereign sway may be dissolved by might?
Nor is the people's judgment always true:
The most may err as grossly as the few,
And faultless kings run down by common cry,
For vice, oppression, and for tyranny.

What standard is there in a fickle rout,
Which, flowing to the mark, runs faster out?
Nor only crowds but Sanhedrims may be
Infected with this public lunacy,
And share the madness of rebellious times,
To murder monarchs for imagined crimes.
If they may give and take whene'er they please,
Not kings alone, the Godhead's images,
But government itself at length must fall
To nature's state, where all have right to all.
Yet grant our lords the people kings can make,
What prudent men a settled throne would shake?
For whatsoe'er their sufferings were before,
That change they covet makes them suffer more.
All other errors but disturb a state;
But innovation is the blow of fate.
If ancient fabrics nod, and threat to fall,
To patch their flaws, and buttress up the wall,
Thus far 'tis duty: but here fix the mark;
For all beyond it is to touch the ark.
To change foundations, cast the frame anew,
Is work for rebels, who base ends pursue;
At once divine and human laws control,
And mend the parts by ruin of the whole.
The tampering world is subject to this curse,
To physic their disease into a worse.

Now what relief can righteous David bring?
How fatal 'tis to be too good a king!
Friends he has few, so high the madness grows;
Who dare be such must be the people's foes.
Yet some there were, e'en in the worst of days;
Some let me name, and naming is to praise.

In this short file Barzillai first appears;
Barzillai, crown'd with honour and with years.
Long since, the rising rebels he withstood
In regions waste beyond the Jordan's flood:
Unfortunately brave, to buoy the state,
But sinking underneath his master's fate:
In exile with his godlike prince he mourn'd;
For him he suffer'd, and with him return'd.
The court he practised, not the courtier's art:
Large was his wealth, but larger was his heart,
Which well the noblest objects knew to choose,
The fighting warrior, and recording muse.

His bed could once a fruitful issue boast;
Now more than half a father's name is lost.
His eldest hope, with every grace adorn'd,
By me, so Heaven will have it, always mourn'd,
And always honour'd,—snatch'd in manhood's prime
By unequal fates, and providence's crime;
Yet not before the goal of honour won,
All parts fulfill'd of subject and of son:
Swift was the race, but short the time to run.
Oh, narrow circle, but of power divine,
Scanted in space, but perfect in thy line!
By sea, by land, thy matchless worth was known,
Arms thy delight, and war was all thy own:
Thy force infused the fainting Tyrians propp'd:
And haughty Pharaoh found his fortune stopp'd.
Oh, ancient honour! Oh, unconquer'd hand,
Whom foes unpunish'd never could withstand!
But Israel was unworthy of his name;
Short is the date of all immoderate fame.
It looks as Heaven our ruin had design'd,
And durst not trust thy fortune and thy mind.
Now, free from earth, thy disencumber'd soul
Mounts up, and leaves behind the clouds and starry pole:
From thence thy kindred legions mayst thou bring,
To aid the guardian angel of thy king.
Here stop, my muse, here cease thy painful flight:
No pinions can pursue immortal height:
Tell good Barzillai thou canst sing no more,
And tell thy soul she should have fled before:
Or fled she with his life, and left this verse
To hang on her departed patron's hearse?
Now take thy steepy flight from heaven, and see
If thou canst find on earth another he:
Another he would be too hard to find;
See then whom thou canst see, not far behind.
Zadoc the priest, whom, shunning power and place,
His lowly mind advanced to David's grace.
With him the Sagan of Jerusalem,
Of hospitable soul, and noble stem;
Him of the western dome, whose weighty sense
Flows in fit words and heavenly eloquence.
The prophets' sons, by such example led,
To learning and to loyalty were bred:

For colleges on bounteous kings depend,
And never rebel was to arts a friend.
To these succeed the pillars of the laws;
Who best can plead, and best can judge a cause.
Next them a train of loyal peers ascend;
Sharp-judging Adriel, the muses' friend.
Himself a muse: in Sanhedrim's debate
True to his prince, but not a slave of state:
Whom David's love with honours did adorn,
That from his disobedient son were torn.
Jotham of piercing wit, and pregnant thought:
Endued by nature, and by learning taught,
To move assemblies, who but only tried
The worse awhile, then chose the better side:
Nor chose alone, but turn'd the balance too;
So much the weight of one brave man can do.
Hushai, the friend of David in distress;
In public storms, of manly steadfastness:
By foreign treaties he informed his youth,
And join'd experience to his native truth.
His frugal care supplied the wanting throne;
Frugal for that, but bounteous of his own:
'Tis easy conduct when exchequers flow;
But hard the task to manage well the low:
For sovereign power is too depress'd or high,
When kings are forced to sell, or crowds to buy.
Indulge one labour more, my weary muse,
For Amiel: who can Amiel's praise refuse?
Of ancient race by birth, but nobler yet
In his own worth, and without title great:
The Sanhedrim long time as chief he ruled,
Their reason guided, and their passion cool'd:
So dexterous was he in the crown's defence,
So form'd to speak a loyal nation's sense,
That, as their band was Israel's tribes in small,
So fit was he to represent them all.
Now rasher charioteers the seat ascend,
Whose loose careers his steady skill commend:
They, like the unequal ruler of the day,
Misguide the seasons, and mistake the way:
While he, withdrawn, at their mad labours smiles,
And safe enjoys the sabbath of his toils.

These were the chief, a small but faithful band

Of worthies, in the breach who dared to stand,
And tempt the united fury of the land.
With grief they view'd such powerful engines bent,
To batter down the lawful government.
A numerous faction, with pretended frights,
In Sanhedrims to plume the regal rights;
The true successor from the court removed,
The plot, by hireling witnesses, improved;
These ills they saw, and, as their duty bound,
They show'd the king the danger of the wound;
That no concessions from the throne would please,
But lenitives fomented the disease:
That Absalom, ambitious of the crown,
Was made the lure to draw the people down:
That false Achitophel's pernicious hate
Had turn'd the plot to ruin church and state:
The council violent, the rabble worse;
That Shimei taught Jerusalem to curse.
With all these loads of injuries oppress'd,
And long revolving in his careful breast
The event of things, at last his patience tired,
Thus, from his royal throne, by Heaven inspired,
The god-like David spoke; with awful fear
His train their Maker in their master hear.
'Thus long have I, by native mercy sway'd,
My wrongs dissembled, my revenge delay'd:
So willing to forgive the offending age,
So much the father did the king assuage.
But now so far my clemency they slight,
The offenders question my forgiving right:
That one was made for many, they contend;
But 'tis to rule; for that's a monarch's end.
They call my tenderness of blood, my fear:
Though manly tempers can the longest bear.
Yet, since they will divert my native course,
'Tis time to show I am not good by force.
Those heap'd affronts that haughty subjects bring,
Are burdens for a camel, not a king.
Kings are the public pillars of the state,
Born to sustain and prop the nation's weight;
If my young Samson will pretend a call
To shake the column, let him share the fall:
But oh, that yet he would repent and live!
How easy 'tis for parents to forgive!

With how few tears a pardon might be won
From nature, pleading for a darling son!
Poor, pitied youth, by my paternal care,
Raised up to all the height his frame could bear!
Had God ordain'd his fate for empire born,
He would have given his soul another turn:
Gull'd with a patriot's name, whose modern sense
Is one that would by law supplant his prince;
The people's brave, the politician's tool;
Never was patriot yet, but was a fool.
Whence comes it, that religion and the laws
Should more be Absalom's than David's cause?
His old instructor, ere he lost his place,
Was never thought indued with so much grace.
Good heavens, how faction can a patriot paint!
My rebel ever proves my people's saint.
Would they impose an heir upon the throne!
Let Sanhedrims be taught to give their own.
A king's at least a part of government;
And mine as requisite as their consent:
Without my leave a future king to choose,
Infers a right the present to depose.
True, they petition me to approve their choice:
But Esau's hands suit ill with Jacob's voice.
My pious subjects for my safety pray;
Which to secure, they take my power away.
From plots and treasons Heaven preserve my years,
But save me most from my petitioners!
Unsatiate as the barren womb or grave;
God cannot grant so much as they can crave.
What then is left, but with a jealous eye
To guard the small remains of royalty!
The law shall still direct my peaceful sway,
And the same law teach rebels to obey;
Votes shall no more establish'd power control,
Such votes as make a part exceed the whole.
No groundless clamours shall my friends remove,
Nor crowds have power to punish ere they prove;
For Gods and god-like kings their care express,
Still to defend their servants in distress.
Oh, that my power to saving were confined!
Why am I forced, like Heaven, against my mind,
To make examples of another kind!

Must I at length the sword of justice draw?
Oh, cursed effects of necessary law!
How ill my fear they by my mercy scan!
Beware the fury of a patient man.
Law they require, let Law then show her face;
They could not be content to look on Grace,
Her hinder parts, but with a daring eye
To tempt the terror of her front and die.
By their own arts 'tis righteously decreed,
Those dire artificers of death shall bleed.
Against themselves their witnesses will swear,
Till viper-like their mother-plot they tear;
And suck for nutriment that bloody gore,
Which was their principle of life before.
Their Belial with their Beelzebub will fight;
Thus on my foes, my foes shall do me right.
Nor doubt the event: for factious crowds engage,
In their first onset, all their brutal rage.
Then let 'em take an unresisted course:
Retire, and traverse, and delude their force:
But, when they stand all breathless, urge the fight,
And rise upon them with redoubled might:
For lawful power is still superior found;
When long driven back at length it stands the ground.'
He said: The Almighty nodding gave consent;
And peals of thunder shook the firmament.
Henceforth a series of new time began,
The mighty years in long procession ran:
Once more the god-like David was restored,
And willing nations knew their lawful lord.

PART II.

[This second part was written by Mr. Nahum Tate, and is by no means equal to the first, though Dryden corrected it throughout, and added above two hundred lines, very easily distinguishable from the lame numbers of Tate. The characters introduced are fewer and of less importance, and require not so much illustration.]

SINCE men like beasts each other's prey were made,
Since trade began, and priesthood grew a trade,
Since realms were form'd, none sure so cursed as those
That madly their own happiness oppose;

There Heaven itself and god-like kings in vain
Shower down the manna of a gentle reign;
While pamper'd crowds to mad sedition run,
And monarchs by indulgence are undone.
Thus David's clemency was fatal grown,
While wealthy faction awed the wanting throne.
For now their sovereign's orders to contemn
Was held the charter of Jerusalem;
His rights to invade, his tributes to refuse,
A privilege peculiar to the Jews;
As if from heavenly call this licence fell,
And Jacob's seed were chosen to rebel!
Achitophel with triumph sees his crimes
Thus suited to the madness of the times;
And Absalom, to make his hopes succeed,
Of flattering charms no longer stands in need;
While fond of change, though ne'er so dearly bought,
Our tribes outstrip the youth's ambitious thought;
His swiftest hopes with swifter homage meet,
And crowd their servile necks beneath his feet.
Thus to his aid while pressing tides repair,
He mounts and spreads his streamers in the air.
The charms of empire might his youth mislead,
But what can our besotted Israel plead?
Sway'd by a monarch, whose serene command
Seems half the blessing of our promised land;
Whose only grievance is excess of ease;
Freedom our pain, and plenty our disease!
Yet, as all folly would lay claim to sense,
And wickedness ne'er wanted a pretence,
With arguments they'd make their treason good,
And righteous David's self with slanders load:
That arts of foreign sway he did affect,
And guilty Jebusites from law protect,
Whose very chiefs, convict, were never freed,
Nay, we have seen their sacrificers bleed!
Accusers' infamy is urged in vain,
While in the bounds of sense they did contain;
But soon they launch'd into the unfathom'd tide,
And in the depths they knew, disdain'd to ride.
For probable discoveries to dispense,
Was thought below a pension'd evidence;
Mere truth was dull, nor suited with the port
Of pamper'd Corah when advanced to court.

THE QUEEN'S DEVOTION.

"His life the theme of her eternal prayer,
'Tis scarce so much his guardian angel's care."

P. 95.

No less than wonders now they will impose,
And projects void of grace or sense disclose.
Such was the charge on pious Michal brought,
Michal, that ne'er was cruel even in thought,
The best of queens, and most obedient wife,
Impeach'd of cursed designs on David's life!
His life, the theme of her eternal prayer,
'Tis scarce so much his guardian angel's care!
Not summer morns such mildness can disclose,
The Hermon lily, nor the Sharon rose.
Neglecting each vain pomp of majesty,
Transported Michal feeds her thoughts on high.
She lives with angels, and, as angels do,
Quits heaven sometimes to bless the world below;
Where, cherish'd by her bounties' plenteous spring,
Reviving widows smile, and orphans sing.
Oh! when rebellious Israel's crimes at height,
Are threaten'd with her lord's approaching fate,
The pieties of Michal then remain
In Heaven's remembrance, and prolong his reign!
Less desolation did the pest pursue,
That from Dan's limits to Beersheba slew;
Less fatal the repeated wars of Tyre,
And less Jerusalem's avenging fire:
With gentler terror these our state o'er-ran,
Than since our evidencing days began!
On every cheek a pale confusion sat,
Continued fear beyond the worst of fate!
Trust was no more; art—science—useless made;
All occupations lost, but Corah's trade.
Meanwhile a guard on modest Corah wait,
If not for safety, needful yet for state.
Well might he deem each peer and prince his slave,
And lord it o'er the tribes which he could save:
Even vice in him was virtue—what sad fate
But for his honesty had seized our state?
And with what tyranny had we been cursed,
Had Corah never proved a villain first?
To have told his knowledge of the intrigue in gross,
Had been, alas! to our deponent's loss:
The travell'd Levite had the experience got
To husband well, and make the best of 's plot;
And therefore, like an evidence of skill,
With wise reserves secured his pension still;

Nor quite of future power himself bereft,
But limbos large for unbelievers left.
And now his writ such reverence had got,
'Twas worse than plotting to suspect his plot.
Some were so well convinced, they made no doubt
Themselves to help the founder'd swearers out.
Some had their sense imposed on by their fear,
But more for interest sake believe and swear:
E'en to that height with some the frenzy grew,
They raged to find their danger not prove true.
Yet, than all these a viler crew remain,
Who with Achitophel the cry maintain;
Not urged by fear, nor through misguided sense;
Blind zeal and starving need had some pretence;
But for the good old cause, that did excite
The original rebels' wiles, revenge and spite.
These raise the plot, to have the scandal thrown
Upon the bright successor of the crown,
Whose virtue with such wrongs they had pursued,
As seem'd all hope of pardon to exclude.
Thus, while on private ends their zeal is built,
The cheated crowd applaud and share their guilt.
Such practices as these, too gross to lie
Long unobserved by each discerning eye,
The more judicious Israelites unspell'd,
Though still the charm the giddy rabble held:
E'en Absalom, amidst the dazzling beams
Of empire, and ambition's flattering dreams,
Perceives the plot, too foul to be excused,
To aid designs, no less pernicious, used:
And, filial sense yet striving in his breast,
Thus to Achitophel his doubts expressed:—
'Why are my thoughts upon a crown employed,
Which once obtain'd can be but half enjoyed?
Not so when virtue did my arms require,
And to my father's wars I flew entire.
My regal power how will my foes resent,
When I myself have scarce my own consent?
Give me a son's unblemish'd truth again,
Or quench the sparks of duty that remain.
How slight to force a throne that legions guard!
The task to me, to prove unjust, how hard!
And if the imagined guilt thus wound my thought,
What will it, when the tragic scene is wrought?

Dire war must first be conjured from below,
The realm we 'd rule we first must overthrow;
And, when the civil furies are on wing
That blind and undistinguish'd slaughters fling,
Who knows what impious chance may reach the king?
Oh! rather let me perish in the strife,
Than have my crown the price of David's life!
Or if the tempest of the war he stand,
In peace, some vile officious villain's hand
His soul's anointed temple may invade,
Or, press'd by clamorous crowds, myself be made
His murtherer; rebellious crowds, whose guilt
Shall dread his vengeance till his blood be spilt;
Which if my filial tenderness oppose,
Since to the empire by their arms I rose,
Those very arms on me shall be employ'd,
A new usurper crown'd, and I destroy'd:
The same pretence of public good will hold,
And new Achitophels be found as bold
To urge the needful change, perhaps the old.'
He said. The statesman with a smile replies,
A smile that did his rising spleen disguise:—
'My thoughts presumed our labours at an end,
And are we still with conscience to contend?
Whose want in kings as needful is allow'd,
As 'tis for them to find it in the crowd.
Far in the doubtful passage you are gone,
And only can be safe by pressing on.
The crown's true heir, a prince severe and wise,
Has view'd your motions long with jealous eyes;
Your person's charms, your more prevailing arts;
And mark'd your progress in the people's hearts;
Whose patience is the effect of stinted power,
But treasures vengeance for the fatal hour:
And if remote the peril he can bring,
Your present danger's greater from the king.
Let not a parent's name deceive your sense,
Nor trust the father in a jealous prince!
Your trivial faults, if he could so resent,
To doom you little less than banishment,
What rage must your presumption since inspire?
Against his orders you return from Tyre;
Nor only so, but with a pomp more high,

And open court of popularity,
The factious tribes'——'And this reproof from thee?'
The prince replies; 'O statesman's winding skill,
They first condemn that first advised the ill!'
'Illustrious youth, (return'd Achitophel,)
Misconstrue not the words that mean you well.
The course you steer I worthy blame conclude,
But 'tis because you leave it unpursued.
A monarch's crown with fate surrounded lies,
Who reach, lay hold on death that miss the prize.
Did you for this expose yourself to show,
And to the crowd bow popularly low?
For this your glorious progress next ordain,
With chariots, horsemen, and a numerous train;
With fame before you like the morning star,
And shouts of joy saluting from afar?
Oh, from the heights you 've reach'd but take a view,
Scarce leading Lucifer could fall like you!
And must I here my shipwreck'd arts bemoan?
Have I for this so oft made Israel groan?
Your single interest with the nation weigh'd,
And turn'd the scale where your desires were laid?
E'en when at helm a course so dangerous moved,
To land your hopes, as my removal proved.'
'I not dispute (the royal youth replies)
The known perfection of your policies;
Nor in Achitophel yet grudge or blame
The privilege that statesmen ever claim;
Who private interest never yet pursued,
But still pretended 'twas for others' good.
What politician yet e'er 'scaped his fate,
Who saving his own neck not saved the state?
From hence, on every humorous wind that veer'd,
With shifted sails a several course you steer'd.
What form of sway did David e'er pursue,
That seem'd like absolute, but sprung from you?
Who at your instance quash'd each penal law,
That kept dissenting factious Jews in awe;
And who suspends fix'd laws, may abrogate;
That done, form new, and so enslave the state.
E'en property, whose champion now you stand,
And seem for this the idol of the land,
Did ne'er sustain such violence before,
As when your counsel shut the royal store;

Advice, that ruin to whole tribes procured,
But secret kept till your own banks secured.
Recount with this the triple covenant broke,
And Israel fitted for a foreign yoke;
Nor here your counsels' fatal progress staid,
But sent our levied powers to Pharaoh's aid.
Hence Tyre and Israel, low in ruins laid,
And Egypt, once their scorn, their common terror made.
Even yet of such a season can we dream,
When royal rights you made your darling theme;
For power unlimited could reasons draw,
And place prerogative above the law;
Which, on your fall from office, grew unjust,
The laws made king, the king a slave in trust;
Whom with state-craft, to interest only true,
You now accuse of ills contrived by you.'
To this Hell's agent—'Royal youth, fix here,
Let interest be the star by which I steer.
Hence to repose your trust in me was wise,
Whose interest most in your advancement lies,
A tie so firm as always will avail,
When friendship, nature, and religion fail;
On ours the safety of the crowd depends,
Secure the crowd, and we obtain our ends,
Whom I will cause so far our guilt to share,
Till they are made our champions by their fear.
What opposition can your rival bring,
While Sanhedrims are jealous of the king?
His strength as yet in David's friendship lies,
And what can David's self without supplies?
Who with exclusive bills must now dispense,
Debar the heir, or starve in his defence;
Conditions which our elders ne'er will quit,
And David's justice never can admit.
Or forced by wants his brother to betray,
To your ambition next he clears the way;
For if succession once to nought they bring,
Their next advance removes the present king:
Persisting else his senates to dissolve,
In equal hazard shall his reign involve.
Our tribes, whom Pharaoh's power so much alarms,
Shall rise without their prince to oppose his arms;
Nor boots it on what cause at first they join,
Their troops, once up, are tools for our design.

At least such subtle covenants shall be made,
Till peace itself is war in masquerade.
Associations of mysterious sense,
Against, but seeming for, the king's defence:
E'en on their courts of justice fetters draw,
And from our agents muzzle up their law.
By which a conquest, if we fail to make,
'Tis a drawn game at worst, and we secure our stake.'
He said, and for the dire success depends
On various sects, by common guilt made friends.
Whose heads, though ne'er so differing in their creed,
I' the point of treason yet were well agreed.
'Mongst these, extorting Ishban first appears,
Pursued by a meagre troop of bankrupt heirs.
Blest times, when Ishban, he whose occupation
So long has been to cheat, reforms the nation!
Ishban of conscience suited to his trade,
As good a saint as usurer ever made.
Yet Mammon has not so engross'd him quite,
But Belial lays as large a claim of spite;
Who, for those pardons from his prince he draws,
Returns reproaches, and cries up the cause.
That year in which the city he did sway,
He left rebellion in a hopeful way.
Yet his ambition once was found so bold,
To offer talents of extorted gold;
Could David's wants have so been bribed, to shame
And scandalise our peerage with his name;
For which, his dear sedition he 'd forswear,
And e'en turn loyal to be made a peer.
Next him, let railing Rabsheka have place,
So full of zeal, he has no need of grace;
A saint that can both flesh and spirit use,
Alike haunt conventicles and the stews:
Of whom the question difficult appears,
If most i' the preachers' or the bawds' arrears.
What caution could appear too much in him
That keeps the treasure of Jerusalem!
Let David's brother but approach the town,
Double our guards, he cries, we are undone.
Protesting that he dares not sleep in 's bed,
Lest he should rise next morn without his head.
Next these, a troop of busy spirits press,
Of little fortunes, and of conscience less;

With them the tribe, whose luxury had drain'd
Their banks, in former sequestrations gain'd;
Who rich and great by past rebellions grew,
And long to fish the troubled streams anew.
Some future hopes, some present payment draws,
To sell their conscience and espouse the cause.
Such stipends those vile hirelings best befit,
Priests without grace, and poets without wit.
Shall that false Hebronite escape our curse,
Judas, that keeps the rebels' pension-purse;
Judas, that pays the treason-writer's fee,
Judas, that well deserves his namesake's tree;
Who at Jerusalem's own gates erects
His college for a nursery of sects;
Young prophets with an early care secures,
And with the dung of his own arts manures.
What have the men of Hebron here to do?
What part in Israel's promised land have you?
Here Phaleg, the lay Hebronite, is come,
'Cause, like the rest, he could not live at home;
Who from his own possessions could not drain
An omer even of Hebronitish grain;
Here struts it like a patriot, and talks high
Of injured subjects, alter'd property:
An emblem of that buzzing insect just,
That mounts the wheel, and thinks she raises dust.
Can dry bones live? or skeletons produce
The vital warmth of cuckoldising juice?
Slim Phaleg could, and, at the table fed,
Return'd the grateful product to the bed.
A waiting-man to travelling nobles chose,
He his own laws would saucily impose,
Till bastinado'd back again he went,
To learn those manners he to teach was sent.
Chastised he ought to have retreated home,
But he reads politics to Absalom.
For never Hebronite, though kick'd and scorn'd,
To his own country willingly return'd.
—But leaving famish'd Phaleg to be fed,
And to talk treason for his daily bread,
Let Hebron, nay, let Hell, produce a man
So made for mischief as Ben-Jochanan,
A Jew of humble parentage was he,
By trade a Levite, though of low degree:

ASIATIC SOC

His pride no higher than the desk aspired,
But for the drudgery of priests was hired
To read and pray in linen ephod brave,
And pick up single shekels from the grave.
Married at last, but finding charge come faster,
He could not live by God, but changed his master:
Inspired by want, was made a factious tool;
They got a villain, and we lost a fool.
Still violent, whatever cause he took,
But most against the party he forsook.
For renegadoes, who ne'er turn by halves,
Are bound in conscience to be double knaves.
So this prose prophet took most monstrous pains
To let his master see he earn'd his gains.
But as the devil owes all his imps a shame,
He chose the apostate for his proper theme;
With little pains he made the picture true,
And from reflection took the rogue he drew.
A wondrous work, to prove the Jewish nation
In every age a murmuring generation;
To trace 'em from their infancy of sinning,
And show 'em factious from their first beginning;
To prove they could rebel, and rail, and mock,
Much to he credit of the chosen flock;
A strong authority, which must convince
That saints own no allegiance to their prince.
As 'tis a leading-card to make a whore,
To prove her mother had turn'd up before.
But, tell me, did the drunken patriarch bless
The son that show'd his father's nakedness?
Such thanks the present church thy pen will give,
Which proves rebellion was so primitive.
Must ancient failings be examples made?
Then murtherers from Cain may learn their trade.
As thou the heathen and the saint hast drawn,
Methinks the apostate was the better man:
And thy hot father, waiving my respect,
Not of a mother-church, but of a sect.
And such he needs must be of thy inditing;
This comes of drinking asses' milk and writing.
If Balak should be call'd to leave his place,
As profit is the loudest call of grace,
His temple, dispossess'd of one, would be
Replenish'd with seven devils more by thee.

Levi, thou art a load; I'll lay thee down,
And show rebellion bare, without a gown;
Poor slaves in metre, dull and addle-pated,
Who rhyme below e'en David's Psalms translated;
Some in my speedy pace I must outrun,
As lame Mephibosheth, the wizard's son;
To make quick way, I 'll leap o'er heavy blocks,
Shun rotten Uzza, as I would the pox;
And hasten Og and Doeg to rehearse,
Two fools that crutch their feeble sense on verse;
Who, by my muse, to all succeeding times
Shall live, in spite of their own doggrel rhymes.
Doeg, though without knowing how or why,
Made still a blundering kind of melody;
Spurr'd boldly on, and dash'd through thick and thin,
Through sense and nonsense, never out nor in;
Free from all meaning, whether good or bad,
And, in one word, heroically mad:
He was too warm on picking-work to dwell,
But fagotted his notions as they fell,
And if they rhymed and rattled, all was well.
Spiteful he is not, though he wrote a satire,
For still there goes some thinking to ill-nature:
He need no more than birds and beasts to think,
All his occasions are to eat and drink.
If he call rogue and rascal from a garret,
He means you no more mischief than a parrot:
The words for friend and foe alike were made,
To fetter them in verse is all his trade.
For almonds, he 'll cry whore to his own mother:
And call young Absalom, king David's brother.
Let him be gallows-free by my consent,
And nothing suffer since he nothing meant;
Hanging supposes human soul and reason;
This animal's below committing treason.
Shall he be hang'd who never could rebel?
That's a preferment for Achitophel.
The woman that committed sodomy
Was rightly sentenced by the law to die;
But 'twas hard fate that to the gallows led
The dog that never heard the statute read.
Railing in other men may be a crime,
But ought to pass for mere instinct in him:

Instinct he follows, and no farther knows,
For to write verse with him is to transprose.
'Twere pity treason at his door to lay,
Who makes *heaven's gate a lock to its own key:*
Let him rail on, let his invective muse
Have four-and-twenty letters to abuse,
Which, if he jumbles to one line of sense,
Indict him of a capital offence.
In fireworks give him leave to vent his spite,
Those are the only serpents he can write;
The height of his ambition is, we know,
But to be master of a puppet-show,
On that one stage his works may yet appear,
And a month's harvest keeps him all the year.
Now stop your noses, readers, all and some,
For here 's a tun of midnight work to come,
Og, from a treason-tavern rolling home;
Round as a globe, and liquor'd every chink,
Goodly and great, he sails behind his link.
With all this bulk there 's nothing lost in Og,
For every inch that is not fool, is rogue:
A monstrous mass of foul corrupted matter,
As all the devils had spew'd to make the batter.
When wine has given him courage to blaspheme,
He curses God, but God before cursed him.
And if man could have reason, none has more,
That made his paunch so rich, and him so poor.
With wealth he was not trusted, for Heaven knew
What 'twas of old to pamper up a Jew;
To what would he on quail and pheasant swell,
That even on tripe and carrion could rebel?
But though Heaven made him poor (with reverence speaking),
He never was a poet of God's making;
The midwife laid her hand on his thick skull
With this prophetic blessing—*Be thou dull!*
Drink, swear, and roar, forbear no lewd delight,
Fit for thy bulk; do anything but write:
Thou art of lasting make, like thoughtless men,
A strong nativity—but for the pen;
Eat opium, mingle arsenic in thy drink,
Still thou mayst live, avoiding pen and ink.
I see, I see, 'tis counsel given in vain,
For treason botch'd in rhyme will be thy bane

Rhyme is the rock on which thou art to wreck;
'Tis fatal to thy fame and to thy neck:
Why should thy metre good king David blast?
A psalm of his will surely be thy last.
Darest thou presume in verse to meet thy foes,
Thou whom the penny pamphlet foil'd in prose?
Doeg, whom God for mankind's mirth has made,
O'ertops thy talent in thy very trade;
Doeg to thee—thy paintings are so coarse—
A poet is, though he 's the poet's horse.
A double noose thou on thy neck dost pull,
For writing treason, and for writing dull.
To die for faction is a common evil,
But to be hang'd for nonsense is the devil.
Hadst thou the glories of thy king express'd,
Thy praises had been satire at the best:
But thou, in clumsy verse, unlick'd, unpointed,
Hast shamefully defied the Lord's anointed.
I will not rake the dunghill of thy crimes,
For who would read thy life that reads thy rhymes?
But of king David's foes, be this the doom,
May all be like the young man Absalom!
And, for my foes, may this their blessing be,—
To talk like Doeg, and to write like thee.

Achitophel each rank, degree, and age,
For various ends neglects not to engage;
The wise and rich, for purse and counsel brought,
The fools and beggars, for their number sought:
Who, yet not only on the town depends,
For even in court the faction had its friends;
These thought the places they possess'd too small,
And in their hearts wish'd court and king to fall;
Whose names the muse disdaining, holds i' the dark,
Thrust in the villain herd without a mark;
With parasites and libel-spawning imps,
Intriguing fops, dull jesters, and worse pimps.
Disdain the rascal rabble to pursue,
Their set cabals are yet a viler crew;
See where involved in common smoke they sit,
Some for our mirth, some for our satire fit:
These gloomy, thoughtful, and on mischief bent,
While those for mere good fellowship frequent
The appointed club, can let sedition pass,
Sense, nonsense, anything to employ the glass;

And who believe, in their dull honest hearts,
The rest talk treason but to show their parts;
Who ne'er had wit or will for mischief yet,
But pleased to be reputed of a set.
But in the sacred annals of our plot,
Industrious Arod never be forgot:
The labours of this midnight-magistrate,
May vie with Corah's to preserve the state.
In search of arms he fail'd not to lay hold
On war's most powerful, dangerous weapon, gold.
And last, to take from Jebusites all odds,
Their altars pillaged,—stole their very gods.
Oft would he cry, when treasure he surprised,
'Tis Baalish gold in David's coin disguised;
Which to his house with richer reliques came,
While lumber idols only fed the flame:
For our wise rabble ne'er took pains to inquire,
What 'twas he burnt, so 't made a rousing fire.
With which our elder was enrich'd no more
Than false Gehazi with the Syrian's store;
So poor, that when our choosing-tribes were met,
Even for his stinking votes he ran in debt;
For meat the wicked, and, as authors think,
The saints he choused for his electing drink;
Thus every shift and subtle method past,
And all to be no Zaken at the last.
Now, raised on Tyre's sad ruins—Pharaoh's pride
Soar'd high, his legions threatening far and wide;
As when a battering storm engender'd high,
By winds upheld, hangs hovering in the sky,
Is gazed upon by every trembling swain,
This for his vineyard fears, and that his grain;
For blooming plants, and flowers new opening, these;
For lambs yean'd lately, and far-labouring bees:
To guard his stock each to the gods does call,
Uncertain where the fire-charged clouds will fall:
Ev'n so the doubtful nations watch his arms,
With terror each expecting his alarms.
Where, Judah, where was now thy lion's roar?
Thou only couldst the captive lands restore;
But thou, with inbred broils and faction press'd,
From Egypt need'st a guardian with the rest.
Thy prince from Sanhedrims no trust allow'd,
Too much the *representers of the crowd*,

Who for their own defence give no supply,
But what the crown's prerogatives must buy:
As if their monarch's rights to violate
More needful were, than to preserve the state!
From present dangers they divert their care,
And all their fears are of the royal heir;
Whom now the reigning malice of his foes,
Unjudged would sentence, and ere crown'd depose.
Religion the pretence, but their decree
To bar his reign, whate'er his faith shall be!
By Sanhedrims and clam'rous crowds thus press'd,
What passions rent the righteous David's breast?
Who knows not how to oppose or to comply,
Unjust to grant, and dangerous to deny!
How near in this dark juncture Israel's fate,
Whose peace one sole expedient could create,
Which yet the extremest virtue did require,
Even of that prince whose downfal they conspire!
His absence David does with tears advise
To appease their rage,—undaunted he complies.
Thus he, who, prodigal of blood and ease,
A royal life exposed to winds and seas,
At once contending with the waves and fire,
And heading danger in the wars of Tyre,
Inglorious now forsakes his native sand,
And like an exile quits the promised land!
Our monarch scarce from pressing tears refrains,
And painfully his royal state maintains,
Who now embracing on the extremest shore
Almost revokes what he enjoined before;
Concludes at last more trust to be allowed
To storms and seas, than to the raging crowd!
Forbear, rash muse, the parting scene to draw,
With silence charm'd as deep as theirs that saw!
Not only our attending nobles weep,
But hardy sailors swell with tears the deep!
The tide restrain'd her course, and more amazed,
The twin-stars on the royal brothers gazed:
While this sole fear——
Does trouble to our suffering hero bring,
Lest next the popular rage oppress the king!
Thus parting, each for the other's danger grieved,
The shore the king, and seas the prince received.

Go, injured hero, while propitious gales,
Soft as thy consort's breath, inspire thy sails;
Well may she trust her beauties on a flood,
Where thy triumphant fleets so oft have rode!
Safe on thy breast reclined, her rest be deep,
Rock'd like a Nereid by the waves asleep;
While happiest dreams her fancy entertain,
And to Elysian fields convert the main!
Go, injured hero, while the shores of Tyre
At thy approach so silent shall admire,
Who on thy thunder still their thoughts employ,
And greet thy landing with a trembling joy.
  On heroes thus the prophet's fate is thrown,
Admired by every nation but their own;
Yet while our factious Jews his worth deny,
Their aching conscience gives their tongue the lie.
Even in the worst of men the noblest parts
Confess him, and he triumphs in their hearts,
Whom to his king the best respects commend
Of subject, soldier, kinsman, prince and friend;
All sacred names of most divine esteem,
And to perfection all sustain'd by him,
Wise, just, and constant, courtly without art,
Swift to discern and to reward desert;
No hour of his in fruitless ease destroy'd,
But on the noblest subjects still employ'd:
Whose steady soul ne'er learnt to separate
Between his monarch's interest and the state,
But heaps those blessings on the royal head,
Which he well knows must be on subjects shed.
  On what pretence could then the vulgar rage
Against his worth, and native rights engage?
Religious fears their argument are made,
Religious fears his sacred rights invade!
Of future superstition they complain,
And Jebusitic worship in his reign:
With such alarms his foes the crowd deceive,
With dangers fright which not themselves believe.
  Since nothing can our sacred rites remove,
Whate'er the faith of the successor prove:
Our Jews their ark shall undisturb'd retain,
At least while their religion is their gain,
Who know by old experience Baal's commands
Not only claim'd their conscience, but their lands;

They grudge God's tithes,—how therefore shall they yield
An idol full possession of the field?
Grant such a prince enthroned, we must confess
The people's sufferings than that monarch's less,
Who must to hard conditions still be bound,
And for his quiet with the crowd compound;
Or should his thoughts to tyranny incline,
Where are the means to compass the design?
Our crown's revenues are too short a store,
And jealous Sanhedrims would give no more.
As vain our fears of Egypt's potent aid,
Not so has Pharaoh learnt ambition's trade,
Nor ever with such measures can comply
As shock the common rules of policy;
None dread like him the growth of Israel's king,
And he alone sufficient aids can bring;
Who knows that prince to Egypt can give law,
That on our stubborn tribes his yoke could draw:
At such profound expense he has not stood,
Nor dyed for this his hands so deep in blood;
Would ne'er through wrong and right his progress take,
Grudge his own rest, and keep the world awake,
To fix a lawless prince on Judah's throne,
First to invade our rights, and then his own;
His dear-gain'd conquests cheaply to despoil,
And reap the harvest of his crimes and toil.
We grant his wealth vast as our ocean's sand,
And curse its fatal influence on our land,
Which our bribed Jews so numerously partake,
That even an host his pensioners would make:
From these deceivers our divisions spring,
Our weakness, and the growth of Egypt's king;
These, with pretended friendship to the state,
Our crowd's suspicion of their prince create,
Both pleased and frighten'd with the specious cry,
To guard their sacred rites and property:
To ruin, thus the chosen flock are sold,
While wolves are ta'en for guardians of the fold;
Seduced by these we groundlessly complain,
And loathe the manna of a gentle reign:
Thus our forefathers' crooked paths are trod,
We trust our prince no more than they their God.
But all in vain our reasoning prophets preach
To those whom sad experience ne'er could teach,

Who can commence new broils in bleeding scars,
And fresh remembrance of intestine wars;
When the same household mortal foes did yield,
And brothers stain'd with brothers' blood the field;
When sons' cursed steel the fathers' gore did stain,
And mothers mourn'd for sons by fathers slain!
When, thick as Egypt's locusts on the sand,
Our tribes lay slaughter'd through the promised land,
Whose few survivors with worse fate remain
To drag the bondage of a tyrant's reign:
Which scene of woes, unknowing, we renew,
And madly, e'en those ills we fear, pursue;
While Pharaoh laughs at our domestic broils,
And safely crowds his tents with nations' spoils.
Yet our fierce Sanhedrim, in restless rage,
Against our absent hero still engage,
And chiefly urge, such did their frenzy prove,
The only suit their prince forbids to move,
Which till obtain'd, they cease affairs of state,
And real dangers waive for groundless hate.
Long David's patience waits relief to bring,
With all the indulgence of a lawful king,
Expecting till the troubled waves would cease,
But found the raging billows still increase.
The crowd, whose insolence forbearance swells,
While he forgives too far, almost rebels.
At last his deep resentments silence broke;
Th' imperial palace shook, while thus he spoke:—
'Then Justice wake, and Rigour take her time,
For, lo! our mercy is become our crime.
While halting Punishment her stroke delays,
Our sovereign right, Heaven's sacred trust, decays!
For whose support e'en subjects' interest calls;
Woe to that kingdom where the monarch falls!
That prince who yields the least of regal sway,
So far his people's freedom does betray.
Right lives by law, and law subsists by power;
Disarm the shepherd, wolves the flock devour.
Hard lot of empire o'er a stubborn race,
Which Heaven itself in vain has tried with grace!
When will our reason's long-charm'd eyes unclose,
And Israel judge between her friends and foes?
When shall we see expired deceivers' sway,
And credit what our God and monarchs say?

Dissembled patriots bribed with Egypt's gold,
E'en Sanhedrims in blind obedience hold;
Those patriots, falsehood in their actions see,
And judge, by the pernicious fruit, the tree:
If aught for which so loudly they declaim,
Religion, laws, and freedom, were their aim;
Our senates in due methods they had led
To avoid those mischiefs which they seem'd to dread;
But first, ere yet they propp'd the sinking state,
To impeach and charge, as urged by private hate,
Proves that they ne'er believed the fears they press'd,
But barbarously destroy'd the nation's rest!
Oh! whither will ungovern'd senates drive,
And to what bounds licentious votes arrive?
When their injustice we are press'd to share,
The monarch urged to exclude the lawful heir;
Are princes thus distinguish'd from the crowd,
And this the privilege of royal blood?
But grant we should confirm the wrongs they press,
His sufferings yet were than the people's less;
Condemn'd for life the murdering sword to wield,
And on their heirs entail a bloody field:
Thus madly their own freedom they betray,
And for the oppression which they fear make way;
Succession fix'd by Heaven, the kingdom's bar,
Which once dissolved, admits the flood of war;
Waste, rapine, spoil, without the assault begin,
And our mad tribes supplant the fence within.
Since then their good they will not understand,
'Tis time to take the monarch's power in hand;
Authority and force to join with skill,
And save the lunatics against their will.
The same rough means that 'suage the crowd, appease
Our senate's, raging with the crowd's disease.
Henceforth unbiass'd measures let them draw
From no false gloss, but genuine text of law;
Nor urge those crimes upon religion's score,
Themselves so much in Jebusites abhor.
Whom laws convict, and only they, shall bleed,
Nor Pharisees by Pharisees be freed.
Impartial justice from our throne shall shower,
All shall have right, and we our sovereign power.'
He said,—the attendants heard with awful joy,
And glad presages their fix'd thoughts employ.

From Hebron now the suffering heir return'd,
A realm that long with civil discord mourn'd;
Till his approach, like some arriving god,
Composed and heal'd the place of his abode;
The deluge check'd, that to Judea spread,
And stopp'd sedition at the fountain's head.
Thus in forgiving David's paths he drives,
And chased from Israel, Israel's peace contrives:
The field confess'd his power in arms before,
And seas proclaim'd his triumphs to the shore;
As nobly has his sway in Hebron shown,
How fit to inherit godlike David's throne.
Through Sion's streets his glad arrival 's spread,
And conscious Faction shrinks her snaky head;
His train their sufferings think o'erpaid to see
The crowd's applause with virtue once agree.
Success charms all, but zeal for worth distress'd,
A virtue proper to the brave and best;
'Mongst whom was Jothran, Jothran always bent
To serve the crown, and loyal by descent,
Whose constancy so firm, and conduct just,
Deserved at once two royal masters' trust;
Who Tyre's proud arms had manfully withstood
On seas, and gather'd laurels from the flood;
Of learning yet no portion was denied,
Friend to the muses and the muses' pride.
Nor can Benaiah's worth forgotten lie,
Of steady soul when public storms were high;
Whose conduct, while the Moor fierce onsets made,
Secured at once our honour and our trade.
Such were the chiefs who most his sufferings mourn'd,
And view'd with silent joy the prince return'd;
While those that sought his absence to betray,
Press first their nauseous false respects to pay;
Him still the officious hypocrites molest,
And with malicious duty break his rest.
While real transports thus his friends employ,
And foes are loud in their dissembled joy,
His triumphs so resounded far and near,
Miss'd not his young ambitious rival's ear;
And as when joyful hunters' clam'rous train
Some slumbering lion wakes in Moab's plain,
Who oft had forced the bold assailants yield,
And scatter'd his pursuers through the field,

Disdaining, furls his mane and tears the ground,
His eyes inflaming all the desert round,
With roar of seas directs his chasers' way,
Provokes from far, and dares them to the fray;
Such rage storm'd now in Absalom's fierce breast,
Such indignation his fired eyes confess'd.
Where now was the instructor of his pride?
Slept the old pilot in so rough a tide?
Whose wiles had from the happy shore betray'd,
And thus on shelves the credulous youth convey'd.
In deep revolving thoughts he weighs his state,
Secure of craft, nor doubts to baffle fate;
At least, if his storm'd bark must go adrift,
To baulk his charge, and for himself to shift.
In which his dextrous wit had oft been shown,
And in the wreck of kingdoms saved his own;
But now with more than common danger press'd,
Of various resolutions stands possess'd,
Perceives the crowd's unstable zeal decay,
Lest their recanting chief the cause betray,
Who on a father's grace his hopes may ground,
And for his pardon with their heads compound.
Him, therefore, ere his fortune slip her time,
The statesman plots to engage in some bold crime
Past pardon, whether to attempt his bed,
Or threat with open arms the royal head,
Or other daring method, and unjust,
That may confirm him in the people's trust.
But failing thus to ensnare him, nor secure
How long his foil'd ambition may endure,
Plots next to lay him by as past his date,
And try some new pretender's luckier fate;
Whose hopes with equal toil he would pursue,
Nor cares what claimer 's crown'd, except the true.
Wake, Absalom, approaching ruin shun,
And see, oh, see, for whom thou art undone!
How are thy honours and thy fame betray'd,
The property of desperate villains made!
Lost power and conscious fears their crimes create,
And guilt in them was little less than fate;
But why shouldst thou, from every grievance free,
Forsake thy vineyards for their stormy sea?
For thee did Canaan's milk and honey flow,
Love dress'd thy bowers, and laurels sought thy brow,

Preferment, wealth, and power thy vassals were,
And of a monarch all things but the care.
Oh, should our crimes again that curse draw down,
And rebel-arms once more attempt the crown,
Sure ruin waits unhappy Absalon,
Alike by conquest or defeat undone!
Who could relentless see such youth and charms
Expire with wretched fate in impious arms?
A prince so form'd, with earth's and Heaven's applause,
To triumph o'er crown'd heads in David's cause:
Or grant him victor, still his hopes must fail,
Who conquering would not for himself prevail;
The faction, whom he trusts for future sway,
Him and the public would alike betray;
Amongst themselves divide the captive state,
And found their hydra-empire in his fate!
Thus having beat the clouds with painful flight,
The pitied youth, with sceptres in his sight,
(So have their cruel politics decreed,)
Must by that crew, that made him guilty, bleed!
For, could their pride brook any prince's sway,
Whom but mild David would they choose to obey?
Who once at such a gentle reign repine,
The fall of monarchy itself design;
From hate to that their reformations spring,
And David not their grievance, but the king.
Seized now with panic fear the faction lies,
Lest this clear truth strike Absalom's charm'd eyes,
Lest he perceive, from long enchantment free,
What all beside the flatter'd youth must see.
But whate'er doubts his troubled bosom swell,
Fair carriage still became Achitophel,
Who now an envious festival installs,
And to survey their strength the faction calls,
Which fraud, religious worship too must gild;
But, oh, how weakly does sedition build!
For, lo! the royal mandate issues forth,
Dashing at once their treason, zeal, and mirth!
So have I seen disastrous chance invade,
Where careful emmets had their forage laid,
Whether fierce Vulcan's rage the furzy plain
Had seized, engender'd by some careless swain,
Or swelling Neptune lawless inroads made,
And to their cell of store his flood convey'd;

The commonwealth broke up, distracted go,
And in wild haste their loaded mates o'erthrow:
Even so our scatter'd guests confusedly meet,
With boil'd, baked, roast, all justling in the street;
Dejected all, and ruefully dismay'd,
For shekel, without treat or treason paid.
Sedition's dark eclipse now fainter shows,
More bright each hour the royal planet grows,
Of force the clouds of envy to disperse,
In kind conjunction of assisting stars.
Here, labouring muse, those glorious chiefs relate,
That turn'd the doubtful scale of David's fate;
The rest of that illustrious band rehearse,
Immortalised in laurell'd Asaph's verse:
Hard task! yet will not I thy flight recall,
View heaven, and then enjoy thy glorious fall.
First write Bezaliel, whose illustrious name
Forestalls our praise, and gives his poet fame.
The Kenites' rocky province his command,
A barren limb of fertile Canaan's land;
Which for its generous natives yet could be
Held worthy such a president as he!
Bezaliel with each grace and virtue fraught,
Serene his looks, serene his life and thought;
On whom so largely nature heap'd her store,
There scarce remain'd for arts to give him more!
To aid the crown and state his greatest zeal,
His second care that service to conceal;
Of dues observant, firm to every trust:
And to the needy always more than just:
Who truth from specious falsehood can divide,
Has all the gownsmen's skill without their pride;
Thus crown'd with worth from heights of honour won,
Sees all his glories copied in his son,
Whose forward fame should every muse engage,
Whose youth boasts skill denied to others' age.
Men, manners, language, books of noblest kind,
Already are the conquest of his mind:
Whose loyalty before its date was prime,
Nor waited the dull course of rolling time:
The monster faction early he dismay'd,
And David's cause long since confess'd his aid.
Brave Abdael o'er the prophets' school was placed;
Abdael, with all his father's virtue graced;

A hero, who, while stars look'd wondering down,
Without one Hebrew's blood restored the crown.
That praise was his; what therefore did remain
For following chiefs, but boldly to maintain
That crown restored; and in this rank of fame,
Brave Abdael with the first a place must claim.
Proceed, illustrious, happy chief, proceed,
Foreseize the garlands for thy brow decreed,
While the inspired tribe attend with noblest strain
To register the glories thou shalt gain:
For sure the dew shall Gilboah's hills forsake,
And Jordan mix his stream with Sodom's lake,
Or seas retired their secret stores disclose,
And to the sun their scaly brood expose,
Or swell'd above the clifts their billows raise,
Before the muses leave their patron's praise.
  Eliab our next labour does invite,
And hard the task to do Eliab right:
Long with the royal wanderer he roved,
And firm in all the turns of fortune proved!
Such ancient service and desert so large,
Well claim'd the royal household for his charge.
His age with only one mild heiress bless'd,
In all the bloom of smiling nature dress'd,
And bless'd again to see his flower allied
To David's stock, and made young Othniel's bride!
The bright restorer of his father's youth,
Devoted to a son's and subject's truth:
Resolved to bear that prize of duty home,
So bravely sought, while sought by Absalom.
Ah prince! the illustrious planet of thy birth,
And thy more powerful virtue guard thy worth;
That no Achitophel thy ruin boast!
Israel too much in one such wreck has lost.
  E'en envy must consent to Holon's worth,
Whose soul, though Egypt glories in his birth,
Could for our captive ark its zeal retain,
And Pharaoh's altars in their pomp disdain:
To slight his gods was small; with nobler pride,
He all the allurements of his court defied:
Whom profit nor example could betray,
But Israel's friend, and true to David's sway.
What acts of favour in his province fall,
On merit he confers, and freely all.

Our list of nobles next let Amri grace,
Whose merits claim'd the Abethdin's high place;
Who, with a loyalty that did excel,
Brought all the endowments of Achitophel.
Sincere was Amri, and not only knew,
But Israel's sanctions into practice drew;
Our laws, that did a boundless ocean seem,
Were coasted all, and fathom'd all by him.
No rabbin speaks like him their mystic sense,
So just, and with such charms of eloquence:
To whom the double blessing does belong,
With Moses' inspiration, Aaron's tongue.
Than Sheva none more loyal zeal have shown,
Wakeful as Judah's lion for the crown,
Who for that cause still combats in his age,
For which his youth with danger did engage.
In vain our factious priests the cant revive;
In vain seditious scribes with libel strive
To inflame the crowd; while he with watchful eye
Observes, and shoots their treasons as they fly;
Their weekly frauds his keen replies detect;
He undeceives more fast than they infect.
So Moses when the pest on legions prey'd,
Advanced his signal, and the plague was stay'd.
Once more, my fainting muse, thy pinions try,
And strength's exhausted store let love supply.
What tribute, Asaph, shall we render thee?
We'll crown thee with a wreath from thy own tree!
Thy laurel grove no envy's flash can blast;
The song of Asaph shall for ever last.
With wonder late posterity shall dwell
On Absalom and false Achitophel:
Thy strains shall be our slumbering prophets' dream,
And when our Sion virgins sing their theme,
Our jubilees shall with thy verse be graced;
The song of Asaph shall for ever last.
How fierce his satire loosed; restrain'd, how tame;
How tender of the offending young man's fame!
How well his worth, and brave adventures styled;
Just to his virtues, to his error mild.
No page of thine that fears the strictest view,
But teems with just reproof, or praise as due;
Not Eden could a fairer prospect yield,
All paradise without one barren field:

Whose wit the censures of his foes has pass'd;
The song of Asaph shall for ever last.
What praise for such rich strains shall we allow?
What just rewards the grateful crown bestow?
While bees in flowers rejoice, and flowers in dew,
While stars and fountains to their course are true;
While Judah's throne, and Sion's rock stand fast,
The song of Asaph and the fame shall last.
Still Hebron's honour'd happy soil retains
Our royal hero's beauteous dear remains;
Who now sails off with winds nor wishes slack,
To bring his sufferings' bright companion back.
But ere such transport can our sense employ,
A bitter grief must poison half our joy;
Nor can our coasts restored those blessings see
Without a bribe to envious destiny!
Cursed Sodom's doom for ever fix the tide
Where by inglorious chance the valiant died.
Give not insulting Askalon to know,
Nor let Gath's daughters triumph in our woe!
No sailor with the news swell Egypt's pride,
By what inglorious fate our valiant died!
Weep, Arnon! Jordan, weep thy fountains dry!
While Sion's rock dissolves for a supply.
Calm were the elements, night's silence deep,
The waves scarce murmuring, and the winds asleep;
Yet fate for ruin takes so still an hour,
And treacherous sands the princely bark devour;
Then death unworthy seized a generous race,
To virtue's scandal, and the stars' disgrace!
Oh! had the indulgent Powers vouchsafed to yield,
Instead of faithless shelves, a listed field;
A listed field of Heaven's and David's foes,
Fierce as the troops that did his youth oppose,
Each life had on his slaughter'd heap retired,
Not tamely, and unconquering thus expired:
But destiny is now their only foe,
And dying, even o'er that they triumph too;
With loud last breaths their master's 'scape applaud,
Of whom kind force could scarce the fates defraud;
Who for such followers lost, oh, matchless mind!
At his own safety now almost repined!
Say, royal Sir, by all your fame in arms,
Your praise in peace, and by Urania's charms;

If all your sufferings past so nearly press'd,
Or pierced with half so painful grief your breast?
Thus some diviner muse her hero forms,
Not soothed with soft delights, but toss'd in storms.
Nor stretch'd on roses in the myrtle grove,
Nor crowns his days with mirth, his nights with love,
But far removed in thundering camps is found,
His slumbers short, his bed the herbless ground:
In tasks of danger always seen the first,
Feeds from the hedge, and slakes with ice his thirst.
Long must his patience strive with fortune's rage,
And long opposing gods themselves engage,
Must see his country flame, his friends destroyed,
Before the promised empire be enjoyed:
Such toil of fate must build a man of fame,
And such, to Israel's crown, the godlike David came.
What sudden beams dispel the clouds so fast,
Whose drenching rains laid all our vineyards waste?
The spring so far behind her course delayed,
On the instant is in all her bloom arrayed;
The winds breathe low, the element serene;
Yet mark what motion in the waves is seen!
Thronging and busy as Hyblæan swarms,
Or straggled soldiers summon'd to their arms.
See where the princely bark, in loosest pride,
With all her guardian fleet, adorns the tide!
High on her deck the royal lovers stand,
Our crimes to pardon ere they touch'd our land.
Welcome to Israel and to David's breast!
Here all your toils, here all your sufferings rest.
This year did Ziloah rule Jerusalem,
And boldly all sedition's surges stem,
Howe'er encumber'd with a viler pair
Than Ziph or Shimei to assist the chair;
Yet Ziloah's loyal labours so prevail'd,
That faction at the next election fail'd,
When even the common cry did justice sound,
And merit by the multitude was crown'd:
With David then was Israel's peace restored,
Crowds mourn'd their error, and obey'd their lord.

THE MEDAL.

A SATIRE AGAINST SEDITION.

AN EPISTLE TO THE WHIGS.

FOR to whom can I dedicate this poem, with so much justice as to you? 'Tis the representation of your own hero: 'tis the picture drawn at length, which you admire and prize so much in little. None of your ornaments are wanting; neither the landscape of the Tower, nor the rising sun; nor the Anno Domini of your new sovereign's coronation. This must needs be a grateful undertaking to your whole party; especially to those who have not been so happy as to purchase the original. I hear the graver has made a good market of it: all his kings are bought up already; or the value of the remainder so inhanced, that many a poor Polander who would be glad to worship the image, is not able to go to the cost of him, but must be content to see him here. I must confess I am no great artist; but sign-post painting will serve the turn to remember a friend by, especially when better is not to be had. Yet for your comfort the lineaments are true; and though he sat not five times to me, as he did to B., yet I have consulted history, as the Italian painters do, when they would draw a Nero, or a Caligula; though they have not seen the men, they can help their imagination by a statue of him, and find out the colouring from Suetonius and Tacitus. Truth is, you might have spared one side of your Medal; the head would be seen to more advantage if it were placed on a spike of the Tower, a little nearer to the sun, which would then break out to better purpose.

You tell us in your preface to the No-protestant Plot, that you shall be forced hereafter to leave off your modesty: I suppose you mean that little which is left you; for it was worn to rags when you put out this Medal. Never was there practised such a piece of notorious impudence in the face of an established government. I believe when he is dead you will wear him in thumb-rings, as the Turks did Scanderbeg; as if there were virtue in his bones to preserve you against monarchy. Yet all this while you pretend not only zeal for the public good, but a due veneration for the person of the king. But all men who can see an inch before them, may easily detect those gross fallacies. That it is necessary for men in your circumstances to pretend both, is granted you; for without them there could be no ground to raise a faction. But I would ask you one civil question, What

right has any man among you, or any association of men, (to come nearer to you,) who, out of parliament, cannot be considered in a public capacity, to meet as you daily do in factious clubs, to vilify the government in your discourses, and to libel it in all your writings? Who made you judges in Israel? Or how is it consistent with your zeal to the public welfare to promote sedition? Does your definition of loyal, which is to serve the king according to the laws, allow you the licence of traducing the executive power with which you own he is invested? You complain that his Majesty has lost the love and confidence of his people; and by your very urging it, you endeavour what in you lies to make him lose them. All good subjects abhor the thought of arbitrary power, whether it be in one or many: if you were the patriots you would seem, you would not at this rate incense the multitude to assume it; for no sober man can fear it, either from the king's disposition, or his practice, or even where you would odiously lay it, from his ministers. Give us leave to enjoy the government and the benefit of laws under which we were born, and which we desire to transmit to our posterity. You are not the trustees of the public liberty; and if you have not right to petition in a crowd, much less have you to intermeddle in the management of affairs, or to arraign what you do not like, which in effect is every thing that is done by the king and council. Can you imagine that any reasonable man will believe you respect the person of his Majesty, when 'tis apparent that your seditious pamphlets are stuffed with particular reflections on him? If you have the confidence to deny this, 'tis easy to be evinced from a thousand passages, which I only forbear to quote, because I desire they should die, and be forgotten. I have perused many of your papers; and to show you that I have, the third part of your No-protestant Plot is much of it stolen from your dead author's pamphlet, called the Growth of Popery; as manifestly as Milton's Defence of the English People is from Buchanan De jure regni apud Scotos; or your first Covenant and new Association from the holy league of the French Guisards. Any one who reads Davila, may trace your practices all along. There were the same pretences for reformation and loyalty, the same aspersions of the king, and the same grounds of a rebellion. I know not whether you will take the historian's word, who says it was reported, that Poltrot, a Hugonot, murdered Francis, duke of Guise, by the instigations of Theodore Beza, or that it was a Hugonot minister, otherwise called a Presbyterian, (for our church abhors so devilish a tenet) who first writ a treatise of the lawfulness of deposing and murdering kings of a different persuasion in religion; but I am able to prove, from the doctrine of Calvin, and principles of Buchanan, that they set the people above the magistrate; which, if I mistake not, is your own fundamental,

and which carries your loyalty no farther than your liking. When a vote of the House of Commons goes on your side, you are as ready to observe it as if it were passed into a law; but when you are pinched with any former and yet unrepealed Act of Parliament, you declare that in some cases you will not be obliged by it. The passage is in the same third part of the No-protestant Plot, and is too plain to be denied. The late copy of your intended association, you neither wholly justify nor condemn; but as the papists, when they are unopposed, fly out into all the pageantries of worship; but in times of war, when they are hard pressed by arguments, lie close entrenched behind the Council of Trent: so now, when your affairs are in a low condition, you dare not pretend that to be a legal combination, but whensoever you are afloat, I doubt not but it will be maintained and justified to purpose. For indeed there is nothing to defend it but the sword: 'tis the proper time to say any thing when men have all things in their power.

In the mean time, you would fain be nibbling at a parallel betwixt this association, and that in the time of Queen Elizabeth. But there is this small difference betwixt them, that the ends of the one are directly opposite to the other: one with the Queen's approbation and conjunction, as head of it, the other without either the consent or knowledge of the King, against whose authority it is manifestly designed. Therefore you do well to have recourse to your last evasion, that it was contrived by your enemies, and shuffled into the papers that were seized; which yet you see the nation is not so easy to believe as your own jury; but the matter is not difficult, to find twelve men in Newgate who would acquit a malefactor.

I have one only favour to desire of you at parting, that when you think of answering this poem, you would employ the same pens against it, who have combated with so much success against Absalom and Achitophel: for then you may assure yourselves of a clear victory without the least reply. Rail at me abundantly; and, not to break a custom, do it without wit: by this method you will gain a considerable point, which is, wholly to waive the answer of my arguments. Never own the bottom of your principles, for fear they should be treason. Fall severely on the miscarriages of government; for if scandal be not allowed, you are no free-born subjects. If God has not blessed you with the talent of rhyming, make use of my poor stock and welcome; let your verses run upon my feet; and for the utmost refuge of notorious blockheads, reduced to the last extremity of sense, turn my own lines upon me, and in utter despair of your own satire, make me satirize myself. Some of you have been driven to this bay already; but, above all the rest, commend me to the non-conformist parson, who writ the Whip and Key. I am afraid it is not read so much as the piece

deserves, because the bookseller is every week crying help at the end of his Gazette, to get it off. You see I am charitable enough to do him a kindness, that it may be published as well as printed; and that so much skill in Hebrew derivations may not lie for waste paper in the shop. Yet I half suspect he went no further for his learning than the index of Hebrew names and etymologies, which is printed at the end of some English bibles. If Achitophel signify the brother of a fool, the author of that poem will pass with his readers for the next of kin. And perhaps it is the relation that makes the kindness. Whatever the verses are, buy them up, I beseech you, out of pity; for I hear the conventicle is shut up, and the brother of Achitophel out of service.

Now footmen, you know, have the generosity to make a purse for a member of their society who has had his livery pulled over his ears; and even Protestant socks are bought up among you, out of veneration to the name. A dissenter in poetry from sense and English will make as good a Protestant rhymer, as a dissenter from the Church of England a Protestant parson. Besides, if you encourage a young beginner, who knows but he may elevate his style a little above the vulgar epithets of profane, and saucy Jack, and atheistical scribbler, with which he treats me, when the fit of enthusiasm is strong upon him: by which well-mannered and charitable expressions I was certain of his sect before I knew his name. What would you have more of a man? He has damned me in your cause from Genesis to the Revelation; and has half the texts of both the Testaments against me, if you will be so civil to yourselves as to take him for your interpreter, and not to take them for Irish witnesses. After all, perhaps you will tell me, that you retained him only for the opening of your cause, and that your main lawyer is yet behind. Now if it so happen he meet with no more reply than his predecessors, you may either conclude that I trust to the goodness of my cause, or fear my adversary, or disdain him, or what you please, for the short on't is, 'tis indifferent to your humble servant, whatever your party says or thinks of him.

THE MEDAL.

Of all our antic sights and pageantry,
Which English idiots run in crowds to see,
The Polish Medal bears the prize alone:
A monster, more the favourite of the town
Than either fairs or theatres have shown.

Never did art so well with nature strive,
Nor ever idol seem'd so much alive;
So like the man, so golden to the sight,
So base within, so counterfeit and light.
One side is fill'd with title and with face;
And, lest the king should want a regal place,
On the reverse, a tower the town surveys,
O'er which our mounting sun his beams displays.
The word, pronounced aloud by shrieval voice,
Lætamur, which, in Polish, is *Rejoice*.
The day, month, year, to the great act are join'd:
And a new canting holiday design'd.
Five days he sat, for every cast and look,
Four more than God to finish Adam took:
But who can tell what essence angels are,
Or how long Heaven was making Lucifer?
Oh, could the style that copied every grace,
And plough'd such furrows for an eunuch-face,
Could it have form'd his ever-changing will,
The various piece had tired the graver's skill!
A martial hero first, with early care,
Blown, like a pigmy by the winds, to war.
A beardless chief, a rebel, ere a man:
So young his hatred to his prince began.
Next this, (how wildly will ambition steer!)
A vermin wriggling in the Usurper's ear.
Bartering his venal wit for sums of gold,
He cast himself into the saint-like mould;
Groan'd, sigh'd, and pray'd, while godliness was gain,
The loudest bagpipe of the squeaking train.
But, as 'tis hard to cheat a juggler's eyes,
His open lewdness he could ne'er disguise:
There split the saint; for hypocritic zeal
Allows no sins but those it can conceal.
Whoring to scandal gives too large a scope:
Saints must not trade; but they may interlope.
The ungodly principle was all the same,
But a gross cheat betrays his partner's game.
Besides, their pace was formal, grave, and slack;
His nimble wit outran the heavy pack.
Yet still he found his fortune at a stay;
Whole droves of blockheads choking up his way:
They took, but not rewarded, his advice;
Villain and wit exact a double price.

Power was his aim: but, thrown from that pretence,
The wretch turn'd loyal in his own defence;
And malice reconciled him to his prince.
Him in the anguish of his soul he served,
Rewarded faster still than he deserved.
Behold him now exalted into trust,
His counsel 's oft convenient, seldom just:
Even in the most sincere advice he gave,
He had a grudging still to be a knave.
The frauds he learn'd in his fanatic years
Made him uneasy in his lawful gears:
At best as little honest as he could,
And, like white witches, mischievously good.
To his first bias, longingly, he leans,
And rather would be great by wicked means.
Thus framed for ill, he loosed our triple hold;
Advice unsafe, precipitous, and bold.
From hence those tears! that Ilium of our woe!
Who helps a powerful friend, fore-arms a foe.
What wonder if the waves prevail so far,
When he cut down the banks that made the bar?
Seas follow but their nature to invade;
But he by art our native strength betray'd.
So Samson to his foe his force confess'd;
And to be shorn, lay slumbering on her breast.
But when this fatal counsel, found too late,
Exposed its author to the public hate;
When his just sovereign, by no impious way
Could be seduced to arbitrary sway;
Forsaken of that hope he shifts the sail,
Drives down the current with a popular gale;
And shows the fiend confess'd without a veil.
He preaches to the crowd, that power is lent,
But not convey'd to kingly government;
That claims successive bear no binding force,
That coronation oaths are things of course;
Maintains the multitude can never err;
And sets the people in the papal chair.
The reason 's obvious; interest never lies;
The most have still their interest in their eyes;
The power is always their's, and power is ever wise.
Almighty crowd! thou shortenest all dispute;
Power is thy essence, wit thy attribute!

Nor faith nor reason make thee at a stay,
Thou leap'st o'er all eternal truths in thy Pindaric way!
Athens, no doubt, did righteously decide,
When Phocion and when Socrates were tried;
As righteously they did those dooms repent;
Still they were wise whatever way they went:
Crowds err not, though to both extremes they run;
To kill the father, and recal the son.
Some think the fools were most as times went then,
But now the world 's o'erstock'd with prudent men.
The common cry is even religion's test,
The Turk's is at Constantinople best;
Idols in India; Popery at Rome;
And our own worship only true at home.
And true, but for the time; 'tis hard to know
How long we please it shall continue so.
This side to-day, and that to-morrow burns;
So all are God-a'mighties in their turns.
A tempting doctrine, plausible and new;
What fools our fathers were, if this be true!
Who, to destroy the seeds of civil war,
Inherent right in monarch's did declare:
And, that a lawful power might never cease,
Secured succession to secure our peace.
Thus property and sovereign sway, at last,
In equal balances were justly cast:
But this new Jehu spurs the hot-mouth'd horse;
Instructs the beast to know his native force;
To take the bit between his teeth, and fly
To the next headlong steep of anarchy.
Too happy England, if our good we knew,
Would we possess the freedom we pursue!
The lavish government can give no more:
Yet we repine, and plenty makes us poor.
God tried us once; our rebel-fathers fought,
He glutted them with all the power they sought:
Till, master'd by their own usurping brave,
The free-born subject sunk into a slave.
We loathe our manna, and we long for quails;
Ah, what is man when his own wish prevails!
How rash, how swift to plunge himself in ill!
Proud of his power, and boundless in his will!
That kings can do no wrong we must believe:
None can they do, and must they all receive?

Help, Heaven! or sadly we shall see an hour,
When neither wrong nor right are in their power!
Already they have lost their best defence,
The benefit of laws which they dispense:
No justice to their righteous cause allow'd:
But baffled by an arbitrary crowd:
And medals graved their conquest to record,
The stamp and coin of their adopted lord.
The man who laugh'd but once, to see an ass
Mumbling to make the cross-grain'd thistles pass,
Might laugh again to see a jury chaw
The prickles of unpalatable law.
The witnesses, that leech-like lived on blood,
Sucking for them were medicinally good;
But when they fasten'd on their fester'd sore,
Then justice and religion they forswore;
Their maiden oaths debauch'd into a whore.
Thus men are raised by factions, and decried;
And rogue and saint distinguish'd by their side.
They rack even Scripture to confess their cause,
And plead a call to preach in spite of laws.
But that 's no news to the poor injured page;
It has been used as ill in every age:
And is constrain'd, with patience, all to take,
For what defence can Greek and Hebrew make?
Happy who can this talking trumpet seize;
They make it speak whatever sense they please:
'Twas framed at first our oracle to inquire;
But since our sects in prophecy grow higher,
The text inspires not them, but they the text inspire.
London, thou great emporium of our isle,
O thou too bounteous, thou too fruitful Nile!
How shall I praise or curse to thy desert?
Or separate thy sound from thy corrupted part?
I call'd thee Nile; the parallel will stand;
Thy tides of wealth o'erflow the fatten'd land;
Yet monsters from thy large increase we find,
Engender'd on the slime thou leav'st behind.
Sedition has not wholly seized on thee,
Thy nobler parts are from infection free.
Of Israel's tribes thou hast a numerous band,
But still the Canaanite is in the land.
Thy military chiefs are brave and true;
Nor are thy disenchanted burghers few.

The head is loyal which thy heart commands,
But what's a head with two such gouty hands?
The wise and wealthy love the surest way,
And are content to thrive and to obey:
But wisdom is to sloth too great a slave;
None are so busy as the fool and knave.
Those let me curse; what vengeance will they urge,
Whose ordures neither plague nor fire can purge?
Nor sharp experience can to duty bring,
Nor angry Heaven, nor a forgiving king!
In gospel phrase their chapmen they betray;
Their shops are dens, the buyer is their prey.
The knack of trades is living on the spoil;
They boast, e'en when each other they beguile.
Customs to steal is such a trivial thing,
That 'tis their charter to defraud their king.
All hands unite of every jarring sect;
They cheat the country first, and then infect.
They for God's cause their monarchs dare dethrone,
And they'll be sure to make his cause their own.
Whether the plotting Jesuit laid the plan
Of murdering kings, or the French Puritan,
Our sacrilegious sects their guides outgo,
And kings and kingly power would murder too.
What means their traitorous combination less,
Too plain to evade, too shameful to confess!
But treason is not own'd when 'tis descried;
Successful crimes alone are justified.
The men, who no conspiracy would find,
Who doubts, but had it taken, they had join'd,
Join'd in a mutual covenant of defence;
At first without, at last against their prince?
If sovereign right by sovereign power they scan,
The same bold maxim holds in God and man:
God were not safe, his thunder could they shun,
He should be forced to crown another son.
Thus when the heir was from the vineyard thrown,
The rich possession was the murderers' own.
In vain to sophistry they have recourse:
By proving their's no plot, they prove 'tis worse;
Unmask'd rebellion, and audacious force;
Which though not actual, yet all eyes may see
'Tis working in the immediate power to be:

For from pretended grievances they rise,
First to dislike, and after to despise.
Then Cyclop-like in human flesh to deal,
Chop up a minister at every meal;
Perhaps not wholly to melt down the king;
But clip his regal rights within the ring:
From thence to assume the power of peace and war,
And ease him by degrees of public care.
Yet, to consult his dignity and fame,
He should have leave to exercise the name;
And hold the cards while commons play'd the game.
For what can power give more than food and drink,
To live at ease, and not be bound to think?
These are the cooler methods of their crime,
But their hot zealots think 'tis loss of time;
On utmost bounds of loyalty they stand,
And grin and whet like a Croatian band,
That waits impatient for the last command.
Thus outlaws open villany maintain,
They steal not, but in squadrons scour the plain:
And if their power the passengers subdue,
The most have right, the wrong is in the few.
Such impious axioms foolishly they show,
For in some soils republics will not grow:
Our temperate isle will no extremes sustain,
Of popular sway or arbitrary reign:
But slides between them both into the best,
Secure in freedom, in a monarch blest:
And though the climate, vex'd with various winds,
Works through our yielding bodies on our minds;
The wholesome tempest purges what it breeds,
To recommend the calmness that succeeds.
But thou, the pander of the people's hearts,
O crooked soul, and serpentine in arts,
Whose blandishments a loyal land have whored,
And broke the bond she plighted to her lord;
What curses on thy blasted name will fall!
Which age to age their legacy shall call;
For all must curse the woes that must descend on all.
Religion thou hast none: thy Mercury
Has pass'd through every sect, or their's through thee.
But what thou giv'st, that venom still remains,
And the pox'd nation feels thee in their brains.

What else inspires the tongues and swells the breasts
Of all thy bellowing renegado priests,
That preach up thee for God; dispense thy laws;
And with thy stum ferment thy fainting cause?
Fresh fumes of madness raise; and toil and sweat
To make the formidable cripple great.
Yet should thy crimes succeed, should lawless power
Compass those ends thy greedy hopes devour,
Thy canting friends thy mortal foes would be,
Thy God and their's will never long agree:
For thine (if thou hast any) must be one
That lets the world and human-kind alone:
A jolly god, that passes hours too well
To promise heaven, or threaten us with hell:
That unconcern'd can at rebellion sit,
And wink at crimes he did himself commit.
A tyrant their's; the heaven their priesthood paints
A conventicle of gloomy sullen saints;
A heaven like Bedlam, slovenly and sad,
Fore-doom'd for souls, with false religion mad.
Without a vision poets can foreshow
What all but fools by common sense may know:
If true succession from our isle should fail,
And crowds profane with impious arms prevail,
Not thou, nor those thy factious arts engage,
Shall reap that harvest of rebellious rage,
With which thou flatterest thy decrepit age.
The swelling poison of the several sects,
Which, wanting vent, the nation's health infects,
Shall burst its bag; and fighting out their way,
The various venoms on each other prey.
The presbyter, puff'd up with spiritual pride,
Shall on the necks of the lewd nobles ride:
His brethren damn, the civil power defy,
And parcel out republic prelacy.
But short shall be his reign: his rigid yoke
And tyrant power will puny sects provoke;
And frogs and toads, and all their tadpole train,
Will croak to heaven for help, from this devouring crane.
The cut-throat sword and clamorous gown shall jar,
In sharing their ill-gotten spoils of war:
Chiefs shall be grudged the part which they pretend;
Lords envy lords, and friends with every friend
About their impious merit shall contend.

The surly commons shall respect deny,
And justle peerage out with property.
Their general either shall his trust betray,
And force the crowd to arbitrary sway;
Or they, suspecting his ambitious aim,
In hate of kings shall cast anew the frame;
And thrust out Collatine that bore their name.
Thus inborn broils the factions would engage,
Or wars of exiled heirs, or foreign rage,
Till halting vengeance overtook our age:
And our wild labours wearied into rest,
Reclined us on a rightful monarch's breast.

RELIGIO LAICI;

OR, A LAYMAN'S FAITH.

THE PREFACE.

A POEM with so bold a title, and a name prefixed from which the handling of so serious a subject would not be expected, may reasonably oblige the author to say somewhat in defence, both of himself and of his undertaking. In the first place, if it be objected to me that, being a layman, I ought not to have concerned myself with speculations, which belong to the profession of divinity; I could answer, that perhaps laymen, with equal advantages of parts and knowledge, are not the most incompetent judges of sacred things; but in the due sense of my own weakness and want of learning I plead not this: I pretend not to make myself a judge of faith in others, but only to make a confession of my own. I lay no unhallowed hand upon the ark, but wait on it with the reverence that becomes me at a distance. In the next place I will ingenuously confess, that the helps I have used in this small treatise, were many of them taken from the works of our own reverend divines of the Church of England; so that the weapons with which I combat irreligion, are already consecrated; though I suppose they may be taken down as lawfully as the sword of Goliah was by David, when they are to be employed for the common cause against the enemies of piety. I intend not by this to entitle them to any of my errors, which yet I hope are only those of charity to mankind; and such as my own charity has caused me to commit, that of others may more easily excuse. Being naturally

inclined to scepticism in philosophy, I have no reason to impose my opinions in a subject which is above it; but whatever they are, I submit them with all reverence to my mother Church, accounting them no further mine, than as they are authorized, or at least uncondemned by her. And, indeed, to secure myself on this side, I have used the necessary precaution of showing this paper before it was published to a judicious and learned friend, a man indefatigably zealous in the service of the Church and State; and whose writings have highly deserved of both. He was pleased to approve the body of the discourse, and I hope he is more my friend than to do it out of complaisance: it is true he had too good a taste to like it all; and, amongst some other faults, recommended to my second view, what I have written perhaps too boldly on St. Athanasius, which he advised me wholly to omit. I am sensible enough that I had done more prudently to have followed his opinion: but then I could not have satisfied myself that I had done honestly not to have written what was my own. It has always been my thought, that heathens who never did, nor without miracle could, hear of the name of Christ, were yet in a possibility of salvation. Neither will it enter easily into my belief, that before the coming of our Saviour, the whole world, excepting only the Jewish nation, should lie under the inevitable necessity of everlasting punishment, for want of that revelation, which was confined to so small a spot of ground as that of Palestine. Among the sons of Noah we read of one only who was accursed; and if a blessing in the ripeness of time was reserved for Japheth (of whose progeny we are), it seems unaccountable to me, why so many generations of the same offspring, as preceded our Saviour in the flesh, should be all involved in one common condemnation, and yet that their posterity should be entitled to the hopes of salvation: as if a bill of exclusion had passed only on the fathers, which debarred not the sons from their succession. Or that so many ages had been delivered over to hell, and so many reserved for heaven, and that the devil had the first choice, and God the next. Truly I am apt to think, that the revealed religion which was taught by Noah to all his sons, might continue for some ages in the whole posterity. That afterwards it was included wholly in the family of Shem is manifest; but when the progenies of Cham and Japheth swarmed into colonies, and those colonies were subdivided into many others, in process of time their descendants lost by little and little the primitive and purer rites of divine worship, retaining only the notion of one deity; to which succeeding generations added others: for men took their degrees in those ages from conquerors to gods. Revelation being thus eclipsed to almost all mankind, the light of nature as the next in dignity was substituted; and that is it which St. Paul concludes to be the rule of the heathens,

and by which they are hereafter to be judged. If my supposition be true, then the consequence which I have assumed in my poem may be also true; namely, that Deism, or the principles of natural worship, are only the faint remnants or dying flames of revealed religion in the posterity of Noah: and that our modern philosophers, nay and some of our philosophising divines, have too much exalted the faculties of our souls, when they have maintained that, by their force, mankind has been able to find out that there is one supreme agent or intellectual being which we call God: that praise and prayer are his due worship: and the rest of those deducements, which I am confident are the remote effects of revelation, and unattainable by our discourse, I mean as simply considered, and without the benefit of divine illumination. So that we have not lifted up ourselves to God, by the weak pinions of our reason, but he has been pleased to descend to us; and what Socrates said of him, what Plato writ, and the rest of the heathen philosophers of several nations, is all no more than the twilight of revelation, after the sun of it was set in the race of Noah. That there is something above us, some principle of motion, our reason can apprehend, though it cannot discover what it is by its own virtue. And indeed 'tis very improbable, that we, who by the strength of our faculties cannot enter into the knowledge of any Being, not so much as of our own, should be able to find out, by them, that supreme nature, which we cannot otherwise define than by saying it is infinite; as if infinite were definable, or infinity a subject for our narrow understanding. They who would prove religion by reason, do but weaken the cause which they endeavour to support; it is to take away the pillars from our faith, and to prop it only with a twig; it is to design a tower like that of Babel, which, if it were possible, as it is not, to reach heaven, would come to nothing by the confusion of the workmen. For every man is building a several way; impotently conceited of his own model and his own materials: reason is always striving, and always at a loss; and of necessity it must so come to pass, while it is exercised about that which is not its own proper object. Let us be content at last to know God by his own methods; at least, so much of him as he is pleased to reveal to us in the sacred Scriptures: to apprehend them to be the word of God is all our reason has to do; for all beyond it is the work of faith, which is the seal of heaven impressed upon our human understanding.

And now for what concerns the holy bishop Athanasius, the preface of whose creed seems inconsistent with my opinion; which is, that heathens may possibly be saved: in the first place I desire it may be considered that it is the preface only, not the creed itself, which, till I am better informed, is of too hard a digestion for my charity. 'Tis not that I am ignorant how many

several texts of Scripture seemingly support that cause; but neither am I ignorant how all those texts may receive a kinder and more mollified interpretation. Every man who is read in Church history knows that belief was drawn up after a long contestation with Arius, concerning the divinity of our blessed Saviour, and his being one substance with the Father; and that thus compiled it was sent abroad among the Christian Churches, as a kind of test, which whosoever took was looked on as an orthodox believer. It is manifest from hence, that the heathen part of the empire was not concerned in it; for its business was not to distinguish betwixt Pagans and Christians, but betwixt Heretics and true Believers. This, well considered, takes off the heavy weight of censure, which I would willingly avoid, from so venerable a man; for if this proposition, "whosoever will be saved," be restrained only to those to whom it was intended, and for whom it was composed, I mean the Christians; then the anathema reaches not the Heathens, who had never heard of Christ, and were nothing interested in that dispute. After all I am far from blaming even that prefatory addition to the creed, and as far from cavilling at the continuation of it in the liturgy of the Church, where on the days appointed it is publicly read: for I suppose there is the same reason for it now, in opposition to the Socinians, as there was then against the Arians; the one being a Heresy, which seems to have been refined out of the other; and with how much plausibility of reason it combats our religion, with so much more caution to be avoided: and therefore the prudence of our Church is to be commended, which has interposed her authority for the recommendation of this creed. Yet to such as are grounded in the true belief, those explanatory creeds, the Nicene and this of Athanasius, might perhaps be spared; for what is supernatural, will always be a mystery in spite of exposition, and for my own part, the plain Apostles' creed is most suitable to my weak understanding, as the simplest diet is the most easy of digestion.

I have dwelt longer on this subject than I intended, and longer than perhaps I ought; for having laid down, as my foundation, that the Scripture is a rule; that in all things needful to salvation it is clear, sufficient, and ordained by God Almighty for that purpose, I have left myself no right to interpret obscure places, such as concern the possibility of eternal happiness to heathens: because whatsoever is obscure is concluded not necessary to be known.

But, by asserting the Scripture to be the canon of our faith, I have unavoidably created to myself two sorts of enemies: the Papists indeed, more directly, because they have kept the Scripture from us what they could; and have reserved to themselves a right of interpreting what they have delivered under the pretence of infallibility: and the Fanatics more collaterally, because

they have assumed what amounts to an infallibility, in the private spirit: and have detorted those texts of Scripture which are not necessary to salvation, to the damnable uses of sedition, disturbance, and destruction of the civil government. To begin with the Papists, and to speak freely, I think them the less dangerous, at least in appearance, to our present state, for not only the penal laws are in force against them, and their number is contemptible; but also their peerage and commons are excluded from parliament, and consequently those laws in no probability of being repealed. A general and uninterrupted plot of their Clergy, ever since the Reformation, I suppose all Protestants believe; for it is not reasonable to think but that so many of their orders, as were outed from their fat possessions, would endeavour a re-entrance against those whom they account heretics. As for the late design, Mr. Coleman's letters, for aught I know, are the best evidence; and what they discover, without wire-drawing their sense, or malicious glosses, all men of reason conclude credible. If there be anything more than this required of me, I must believe it as well as I am able, in spite of the witnesses, and out of a decent conformity to the votes of parliament; for I suppose the fanatics will not allow the private spirit in this case. Here the infallibility is at least in one part of the government; and our understandings as well as our wills are represented. But to return to Roman Catholics, how can we be secure from the practice of Jesuited Papists in that religion? For not two or three of that order, as some of them would impose upon us, but almost the whole body of them are of opinion, that their infallible master has a right over kings, not only in spirituals but temporals. Not to name Mariana, Bellarmine, Emanuel Sa, Molina, Santarel, Simancha, and at least twenty others of foreign countries; we can produce of our own nation, Campian, and Doleman or Parsons, besides many are named whom I have not read, who all of them attest this doctrine, that the Pope can depose and give away the right of any sovereign prince, *si vel paulum deflexerit*, if he shall never so little warp: but if he once comes to be excommunicated, then the bond of obedience is taken off from subjects; and they may and ought to drive him, like another Nebuchadnezzar, *ex hominum Christianorum dominatu*, from exercising dominion over Christians; and to this they are bound by virtue of divine precept, and by all the ties of conscience under no less penalty than damnation. If they answer me, as a learned priest has lately written, that this doctrine of the Jesuits is not *de fide*; and that consequently they are not obliged by it, they must pardon me, if I think they have said nothing to the purpose; for it is a maxim in their Church, where points of faith are not decided, and that doctors are of contrary opinions, they may follow which part they please; but more safely the most received and most authorized. And

their champion Bellarmine has told the world, in his Apology, that the king of England is a vassal to the Pope, *ratione directi dominii*, and that he holds in villanage of his Roman landlord. Which is no new claim put in for England. Our chronicles are his authentic witnesses, that king John was deposed by the same plea, and Philip Augustus admitted tenant. And which makes the more for Bellarmine, the French king was again ejected when our king submitted to the Church, and the crown received under the sordid condition of a vassalage.

It is not sufficient for the more moderate and well-meaning Papists, of which I doubt not there are many, to produce the evidences of their loyalty to the late king, and to declare their innocency in this plot: I will grant their behaviour, in the first, to have been as loyal and as brave as they desire; and will be willing to hold them excused as to the second, I mean when it comes to my turn, and after my betters; for it is a madness to be sober alone, while the nation continues drunk: but that saying of their father Cres. is still running in my head, that they may be dispensed with in their obedience to an heretic prince, while the necessity of the times shall oblige them to it: for that, as another of them tells us, is only the effect of Christian prudence; but when once they shall get power to shake him off, an heretic is no lawful king, and consequently to rise against him is no rebellion. I should be glad, therefore, that they would follow the advice which was charitably given them by a reverend prelate of our Church; namely, that they would join in a public act of disowning and detesting those Jesuitic principles; and subscribe to all doctrines which deny the Pope's authority of deposing kings, and releasing subjects from their oath of allegiance: to which I should think they might easily be induced, if it be true that this present Pope has condemned the doctrine of king-killing, a thesis of the Jesuits, amongst others, *ex cathedrâ* as they call it, or in open consistory.

Leaving them therefore in so fair a way, if they please themselves, of satisfying all reasonable men of their sincerity and good meaning to the government, I shall make bold to consider that other extreme of our religion, I mean the Fanatics, or Schismatics, of the English Church. Since the Bible has been translated into our tongue, they have used it so, as if their business was not to be saved but to be damned by its contents. If we consider only them, better had it been for the English nation that it had still remained in the original Greek and Hebrew, or at least in the honest Latin of St. Jerome, than that several texts in it should have been prevaricated to the destruction of that government which put it into so ungrateful hands.

How many heresies the first translation of Tindal produced in few years, let my lord Herbert's history of Henry the Eighth inform you; insomuch, that for the gross errors in it, and the

great mischiefs it occasioned, a sentence passed on the first edition of the Bible, too shameful almost to be repeated. After the short reign of Edward the Sixth, who had continued to carry on the Reformation on other principles than it was begun, every one knows that not only the chief promoters of that work, but many others, whose consciences would not dispense with Popery, were forced, for fear of persecution, to change climates: from whence returning at the beginning of queen Elizabeth's reign, many of them who had been in France, and at Geneva, brought back the rigid opinions and imperious discipline of Calvin, to graft upon our Reformation. Which, though they cunningly concealed at first, as well knowing how nauseously that drug would go down in a lawful Monarchy, which was prescribed for a rebellious Commonwealth, yet they always kept it in reserve; and were never wanting to themselves either in court or parliament, when either they had any prospect of a numerous party of fanatic members of the one, or the encouragement of any favourite in the other, whose covetousness was gaping at the patrimony of the Church. They who will consult the works of our venerable Hooker, or the account of his life, or more particularly the letter written to him on this subject, by George Cranmer, may see by what gradations they proceeded; from the dislike of cap and surplice, the very next step was admonitions to the parliament against the whole government ecclesiastical: then came out volumes in English and Latin in defence of their tenets: and immediately practices were set on foot to erect their discipline without authority. Those not succeeding, satire and railing was the next: and Martin Mar-prelate, the Marvel of those times, was the first presbyterian scribbler, who sanctified libels and scurrility to the use of the good old cause. Which was done, says my author, upon this account; that their serious treatises having been fully answered and refuted, they might compass by railing what they had lost by reasoning; and, when their cause was sunk in court and parliament, they might at least hedge in a stake amongst the rabble: for to their ignorance all things are wit which are abusive; but if Church and State were made the theme, then the doctoral degree of wit was to be taken at Billingsgate: even the most saintlike of the party, though they durst not excuse this contempt and vilifying of the government, yet were pleased, and grinned at it with a pious smile; and called it a judgment of God against the hierarchy. Thus sectaries, we may see, were born with teeth, foul-mouthed and scurrilous from their infancy: and if spiritual pride, venom, violence, contempt of superiors, and slander, had been the marks of orthodox belief; the presbytery and the rest of our schismatics, which are their spawn, were always the most visible Church in the Christian world.

It is true, the government was too strong at that time for a

rebellion; but to show what proficiency they had made in Calvin's school, even then their mouths watered at it: for two of their gifted brotherhood, Hacket and Coppinger, as the story tells us, got up into a pease-cart, and harangued the people, to dispose them to an insurrection, and to establish their discipline by force: so that however it comes about, that now they celebrate queen Elizabeth's birth-night, as that of their saint and patroness; yet then they were for doing the work of the Lord by arms against her; and in all probability they wanted but a fanatic lord mayor and two sheriffs of their party, to have compassed it.

Our venerable Hooker, after many admonitions which he had given them, towards the end of his preface, breaks out into this prophetic speech: "There is in every one of these considerations most just cause to fear, lest our hastiness to embrace a thing of so perilous consequence," (meaning the presbyterian discipline,) "should cause posterity to feel those evils, which as yet are more easy for us to prevent, than they would be for them to remedy."

How fatally this Cassandra has foretold we know too well by sad experience: the seeds were sown in the time of queen Elizabeth, the bloody harvest ripened in the reign of king Charles the Martyr: and because all the sheaves could not be carried off without shedding some of the loose grains, another crop is too likely to follow; nay, I fear it is unavoidable if the conventiclers be permitted still to scatter.

A man may be suffered to quote an adversary to our religion, when he speaks truth: and it is the observation of Maimbourg, in his History of Calvinism, that wherever that discipline was planted and embraced, rebellion, civil war, and misery attended it. And how indeed should it happen otherwise? Reformation of Church and State has always been the ground of our divisions in England. While we were Papists, our holy father rid us, by pretending authority out of the Scriptures to depose princes; when we shook off his authority, the sectaries furnished themselves with the same weapons; and out of the same magazine, the Bible: so that the Scriptures, which are in themselves the greatest security of governors, as commanding express obedience to them, are now turned to their destruction; and never since the Reformation has there wanted a text of their interpreting to authorize a rebel. And it is to be noted by the way, that the doctrines of king-killing and deposing, which have been taken up only by the worst party of the Papists, the most frontless flatterers of the Pope's authority, have been espoused, defended, and are still maintained by the whole body of Nonconformists and republicans. It is but dubbing themselves the people of God, which it is the interest of their preachers to tell them they are, and their own interest to believe; and after that, they

RELIGIO LAICI.

"Dim as the borrow'd beam of moon and stars,
To lonely, weary, wandering travellers."

P. 139.

cannot dip into the Bible, but one text or other will turn up for their purpose: if they are under persecution, as they call it, then that is a mark of their election; if they flourish, then God works miracles for their deliverance, and the saints are to possess the earth.

They may think themselves to be too roughly handled in this paper; but I who know best how far I could have gone on this subject, must be bold to tell them they are spared: though at the same time I am not ignorant that they interpret the mildness of a writer to them, as they do the mercy of the government; in the one they think it fear, and conclude it weakness in the other. The best way for them to confute me is, as I before advised the Papists, to disclaim their principles and renounce their practices. We shall all be glad to think them true Englishmen when they obey the King, and true Protestants when they conform to the Church-discipline.

It remains that I acquaint the reader, that these verses were written for an ingenious young gentlemen my friend, upon his translation of The Critical History of the Old Testament, composed by the learned father Simon: the verses therefore are addressed to the translator of that work, and the style of them is, what it ought to be, epistolary.

If any one be so lamentable a critic as to require the smoothness, the numbers, and the turn of heroic poetry in this poem; I must tell him, that if he has not read Horace, I have studied him, and hope the style of his epistles is not ill imitated here The expressions of a poem designed purely for instruction ought to be plain and natural, and yet majestic; for here the poem is presumed to be a kind of lawgiver, and those three qualities which I have named, are proper to the legislative style. The florid, elevated, and figurative way is for the passions; for love and hatred, fear and anger, are begotten in the soul, by showing their objects out of their true proportion, either greater than the life or less: but instruction is to be given by showing them what they naturally are. A man is to be cheated into passion, but to be reasoned into truth.

RELIGIO LAICI.

DIM as the borrow'd beams of moon and stars
To lonely, weary, wandering travellers,
Is Reason to the soul: and as on high,
Those rolling fires discover but the sky,
Not light us here; so Reason's glimmering ray

Was lent, not to assure our doubtful way,
But guide us upward to a better day.
And as those nightly tapers disappear,
When day's bright lord ascends our hemisphere;
So pale grows Reason at Religion's sight;
So dies, and so dissolves in supernatural light.
Some few, whose lamp shone brighter, have been led
From cause to cause, to nature's secret head;
And found that one first principle must be:
But what, or who, that UNIVERSAL HE;
Whether some soul incompassing this ball,
Unmade, unmoved; yet making, moving all;
Or various atoms' interfering dance
Leap'd into form, the noble work of chance;
Or this great all was from eternity;
Not even the Stagirite himself could see:
And Epicurus guess'd as well as he.
As blindly groped they for a future state;
As rashly judged of providence and fate:
But least of all could their endeavours find
What most concern'd the good of human kind;
For happiness was never to be found,
But vanish'd from 'em like enchanted ground.
One thought Content the good to be enjoy'd;
This every little accident destroy'd:
The wiser madmen did for Virtue toil,
A thorny or at best a barren soil:
In Pleasure some their glutton souls would steep,
But found their line too short, the well too deep;
And leaky vessels which no bliss could keep.
Thus anxious thoughts in endless circles roll,
Without a centre where to fix the soul:
In this wild maze their vain endeavours end:
How can the less the greater comprehend?
Or finite reason reach Infinity?
For what could fathom God were more than He.
The Deist thinks he stands on firmer ground;
Cries, Eureka—the mighty secret 's found:
God is that spring of good; supreme, and best;
We, made to serve, and in that service blest:
If so, some rules of worship must be given,
Distributed alike to all by Heaven;
Else God were partial, and to some denied
The means his justice should for all provide.

This general worship is to praise and pray:
One part to borrow blessings, one to pay:
And when frail nature slides into offence,
The sacrifice for crimes is penitence.
Yet since the effects of providence, we find,
Are variously dispensed to human kind;
That vice triumphs, and virtue suffers here,
A brand that sovereign justice cannot bear;
Our reason prompts us to a future state:
The last appeal from fortune and from fate:
Where God's all-righteous ways will be declared
The bad meet punishment, the good reward.
Thus man by his own strength to heaven would soar:
And would not be obliged to God for more.
Vain, wretched creature, how art thou misled
To think thy wit these god-like notions bred!
These truths are not the product of thy mind,
But dropt from Heaven, and of a nobler kind.
Revealed Religion first inform'd thy sight,
And Reason saw not, till Faith sprung the light.
Hence all thy natural worship takes the source;
'Tis revelation what thou think'st discourse:
Else how com'st thou to see these truths so clear,
Which so obscure to Heathens did appear?
Not Plato these, nor Aristotle found:
Nor he whose wisdom oracles renown'd.
Hast thou a wit so deep, or so sublime,
Or canst thou lower dive, or higher climb?
Canst thou by reason more of Godhead know
Than Plutarch, Seneca, or Cicero?
Those giant wits in happier ages born,
(When arms and arts did Greece and Rome adorn,)
Knew no such system: no such piles could raise
Of natural worship, built on prayer and praise
To one sole God.
Nor did remorse to expiate sin prescribe:
But slew their fellow-creatures for a bribe:
The guiltless victim groan'd for their offence;
And cruelty and blood was penitence.
If sheep and oxen could atone for men,
Ah! at how cheap a rate the rich might sin;
And great oppressors might Heaven's wrath beguile,
By offering his own creatures for a spoil!

Dar'st thou, poor worm, offend Infinity?
And must the terms of peace be given by thee?
Then thou art Justice in the last appeal;
Thy easy God instructs thee to rebel:
And, like a king remote, and weak, must take
What satisfaction thou art pleased to make.
But if there be a power too just and strong
To wink at crimes, and bear unpunish'd wrong;
Look humbly upward, see his will disclose
The forfeit first, and then the fine impose:
A mulct thy poverty could never pay,
Had not Eternal Wisdom found the way:
And with celestial wealth supplied thy store:
His justice makes the fine, his mercy quits the score.
See God descending in thy human frame;
The offended suffering in the offender's name;
All thy misdeeds to him imputed see,
And all his righteousness devolved on thee.
For granting we have sinn'd, and that the offence
Of man is made against Omnipotence,
Some price that bears proportion must be paid,
And infinite with infinite be weigh'd.
See then the Deist lost: remorse for vice
Not paid, or paid, inadequate in price:
What farther means can Reason now direct,
Or what relief from human wit expect?
That shows us sick; and sadly are we sure
Still to be sick, till Heaven reveal the cure:
If then Heaven's will must needs be understood,
(Which must, if we want cure, and Heaven be good,)
Let all records of will revealed be shown;
With Scripture all in equal balance thrown,
And our one sacred book will be that one.
Proof needs not here, for whether we compare
That impious, idle, superstitious ware
Of rites, lustrations, offerings, which before,
In various ages, various countries bore,
With Christian faith and virtues, we shall find
None answering the great ends of human kind,
But this one rule of life, that shows us best
How God may be appeased, and mortals blest.
Whether from length of time its worth we draw,
The world is scarce more ancient than the law:

Heaven's early care prescribed for every age,
First, in the soul, and after in the page.
Or, whether more abstractedly we look,
Or on the writers, or the written book,
Whence, but from Heaven, could men unskill'd in arts,
In several ages born, in several parts,
Weave such agreeing truths? or how, or why,
Should all conspire to cheat us with a lie?
Unask'd their pains, ungrateful their advice,
Starving their gain, and martyrdom their price.
If on the book itself we cast our view,
Concurrent heathens prove the story true:
The doctrine, miracles; which must convince,
For Heaven in them appeals to human sense:
And though they prove not, they confirm the cause,
When what is taught agrees with nature's laws.
Then for the style, majestic and divine,
It speaks no less than God in every line:
Commanding words, whose force is still the same
As the first fiat that produced our frame.
All faiths beside, or did by arms ascend,
Or sense indulged has made mankind their friend:
This only doctrine does our lusts oppose:
Unfed by nature's soil, in which it grows;
Cross to our interests, curbing sense and sin;
Oppress'd without, and undermined within,
It thrives through pain; its own tormentors tires;
And with a stubborn patience still aspires.
To what can Reason such effects assign
Transcending nature, but to laws divine?
Which in that sacred volume are contain'd;
Sufficient, clear, and for that use ordain'd.
But stay: the Deist here will urge anew,
No supernatural worship can be true:
Because a general law is that alone
Which must to all, and every where, be known:
A style so large as not this book can claim,
Nor aught that bears revealed religion's name.
'Tis said the sound of a Messiah's birth
Is gone through all the habitable earth:
But still that text must be confined alone
To what was then inhabited and known:
And what provision could from thence accrue
To Indian souls, and worlds discover'd new?

In other parts it helps, that, ages past,
The Scriptures there were known, and were embraced,
Till Sin spread once again the shades of night:
What's that to these who never saw the light?
  Of all objections this indeed is chief,
To startle reason, stagger frail belief:
We grant, 'tis true, that Heaven from human sense
Has hid the secret paths of Providence:
But boundless wisdom, boundless mercy, may
Find even for those bewilder'd souls a way:
If from his nature, foes may pity claim,
Much more may strangers who ne'er heard his name:
And though no name be for salvation known,
But that of his eternal Son's alone;
Who knows how far transcending goodness can
Extend the merits of that Son to man?
Who knows what reasons may his mercy lead;
Or ignorance invincible may plead?
Not only charity bids hope the best,
But more the great apostle has express'd:
That if the Gentiles, whom no law inspired,
By nature did what was by law required;
They, who the written rule had never known,
Were to themselves both rule and law alone:
To nature's plain indictment they shall plead;
And by their conscience be condemn'd or freed.
Most righteous doom! because a rule revealed
Is none to those from whom it was concealed.
Then those who follow'd Reason's dictates right,
Lived up, and lifted high their natural light;
With Socrates may see their Maker's face,
While thousand rubric martyrs want a place.
  Nor does it balk my charity, to find
The Egyptian bishop of another mind:
For though his creed eternal truth contains,
'Tis hard for man to doom to endless pains
All who believed not all his zeal required;
Unless he first could prove he was inspired.
Then let us either think he meant to say
This faith, where publish'd, was the only way;
Or else conclude, that, Arius to confute,
The good old man, too eager in dispute,
Flew high; and, as his Christian fury rose,
Damn'd all for heretics who durst oppose.

Thus far my charity this path has tried;
(A much unskilful, but well-meaning guide:)
Yet what they are, e'en these crude thoughts were bred
By reading that which better thou hast read:
Thy matchless author's work: which thou, my friend,
By well translating better dost commend:
Those youthful hours, which, of thy equals most
In toys have squander'd, or in vice have lost,
Those hours hast thou to nobler use employ'd,
And the severe delights of truth enjoy'd.
Witness this weighty book, in which appears
The crabbed toil of many thoughtful years,
Spent by thy author, in the sifting care
Of Rabbins' old sophisticated ware
From gold divine; which he who well can sort
May afterwards make algebra a sport.
A treasure, which if country curates buy,
They Junius and Tremellius may defy:
Save pains in various readings and translations,
And without Hebrew make most learn'd quotations.
A work so full with various learning fraught,
So nicely ponder'd, yet so strongly wrought,
As Nature's height and Art's last hand required;
As much as man could compass, uninspired:
Where we may see what errors have been made
Both in the copiers' and translators' trade:
How Jewish—Popish—interests, have prevail'd,
And where infallibility has fail'd.

For some, who have his secret meaning guess'd,
Have found our author not too much a priest:
For fashion-sake he seems to have recourse
To Pope, and Councils, and Tradition's force:
But he that old traditions could subdue,
Could not but find the weakness of the new.
If Scripture, though derived from heavenly birth,
Has been but carelessly preserved on earth;
If God's own people, who of God before
Knew what we know, and had been promised more,
In fuller terms, of Heaven's assisting care,
And who did neither time nor study spare
To keep this book untainted, unperplex'd,
Let in gross errors to corrupt the text,
Omitted paragraphs, embroil'd the sense,
With vain traditions stopp'd the gaping fence,

Which every common hand pull'd up with ease:
What safety from such brushwood-helps as these?
If written words from time are not secured,
How can we think have oral sounds endured?
Which thus transmitted, if one mouth has fail'd,
Immortal lies on ages are entail'd:
And that some such have been, is proved too plain;
If we consider Interest, Church, and Gain.
Oh, but, says one, Tradition set aside,
Where can we hope for an unerring guide?
For since the original Scripture has been lost,
All copies disagreeing, maim'd the most,
Or Christian faith can have no certain ground,
Or truth in Church Tradition must be found.
Such an omniscient Church we wish indeed;
'Twere worth both Testaments; and cast in the Creed:
But if this mother be a guide so sure,
As can all doubts resolve, all truth secure,
Then her infallibility, as well,
Where copies are corrupt or lame, can tell;
Restore lost canon with as little pains,
As truly explicate what still remains:
Which yet no Council dare pretend to do,
Unless like Esdras they could write it new:
Strange confidence, still to interpret true,
Yet not be sure that all they have explain'd,
Is in the blest original contain'd.
More safe, and much more modest 'tis, to say
God would not leave mankind without a way:
And that the Scriptures, though not every where
Free from corruption, or entire, or clear,
Are uncorrupt, sufficient, clear, entire,
In all things which our needful faith require.
If others in the same glass better see,
'Tis for themselves they look, but not for me:
For *my* salvation must its doom receive,
Not from what *others* but what *I* believe.
Must all tradition then be set aside?—
This to affirm were ignorance or pride.
Are there not many points, some needful, sure,
To saving faith, that Scripture leaves obscure?
Which every sect will wrest a several way,
For what one sect interprets, all sects may:
We hold, and say we prove from Scripture plain,

That Christ is GOD; the bold Socinian
From the same Scripture urges he's but *man*.
Now what appeal can end the important suit?
Both parts talk loudly, but the rule is mute.
Shall I speak plain, and in a nation free
Assume an honest layman's liberty?
I think, (according to my little skill—
To my own mother-church submitting still)
That many have been saved, and many may,
Who never heard this question brought in play
The unletter'd Christian, who believes in gross,
Plods on to heaven, and ne'er is at a loss:
For the strait-gate would be made straiter yet,
Were none admitted there but men of wit.
The few by nature form'd, with learning fraught,
Born to instruct, as others to be taught,
Must study well the sacred page: and see
Which doctrine, this, or that, does best agree
With the whole tenor of the work divine;
And plainliest points to Heaven's reveal'd design:
Which exposition flows from genuine sense;
And which is forced by wit and eloquence.
Not that tradition's parts are useless here:
When general, old, disinteressed, clear:
That ancient Fathers thus expound the page,
Gives truth the reverend majesty of age:
Confirms its force, by biding every test;
For best authority's next rules are best:
And still the nearer to the spring we go,
More limpid, more unsoil'd, the waters flow.
Thus, first traditions were a proof alone;
Could we be certain such they were, so known:
But since some flaws in long descent may be,
They make not truth but probability.
Even Arius and Pelagius durst provoke
To what the centuries preceding spoke.
Such difference is there in an oft-told tale
But truth by its own sinews will prevail.
Tradition written therefore more commends
Authority, than what from voice descends:
And this, as perfect as its kind can be,
Rolls down to us the sacred history:
Which from the Universal Church received,
Is tried, and after, for itself believed.

The partial Papists would infer from hence
Their Church, in last resort, should judge the sense.
But first they would assume, with wondrous art,
Themselves to be the whole, who are but part
Of that vast frame, the Church; yet grant they were
The handers down, can they from thence infer
A right to interpret? or would they alone,
Who brought the present, claim it for their own?
The Book's a common largess to mankind;
Not more for them than every man design'd;
The welcome news is in the letter found,
The carrier's not commission'd to expound.
It speaks itself, and what it does contain,
In all things needful to be known, is plain.
In times o'ergrown with rust and ignorance,
A gainful trade their clergy did advance;
When want of learning kept the laymen low,
And none but priests were authorised to know:
When what small knowledge was, in them did dwell,
And he a god who could but read or spell:
Then mother Church did mightily prevail:
She parcell'd out the Bible by retail:
But still expounded what she sold or gave,
To keep it in her power to damn and save.
Scripture was scarce, and as the market went,
Poor laymen took salvation on content,
As needy men take money good or bad;
God's word they had not, but the priest's they had.
Yet, whate'er false conveyances they made,
The lawyer still was certain to be paid.
In those dark times they learn'd their knack so well,
That by long use they grew infallible:
At last, a knowing age began to inquire
If they the Book, or that did them inspire:
And, making narrower search, they found, though late,
That what they thought the priest's, was their estate;
Taught by the will produced, (the written word,)
How long they had been cheated on record.
Then, every man who saw the title fair
Claim'd a child's part, and put in for a share;
Consulted soberly his private good,
And saved himself as cheap as e'er he could.
'Tis true, my friend, (and far be flattery hence,)
This good has full as bad a consequence:

The Book thus put in every vulgar hand,
Which each presumed he best could understand,
The common rule was made the common prey;
And at the mercy of the rabble lay.
The tender page with horny fists was gall'd;
And he was gifted most that loudest bawl'd:
The spirit gave the doctoral degree:
And every member of a company
Was of his trade, and of the Bible, free.
Plain truths enough for needful use they found;
But men would still be itching to expound:
Each was ambitious of the obscurest place,
No measure ta'en from knowledge, all from grace.
Study and pains were now no more their care;
Texts were explain'd by fasting and by prayer:
This was the fruit the private spirit brought:
Occasion'd by great zeal and little thought.
While crowds unlearn'd, with rude devotion warm,
About the sacred viands buzz and swarm,
The fly-blown text creates a crawling brood;
And turns to maggots what was meant for food.
A thousand daily sects rise up and die;
A thousand more the perish'd race supply:
So all we make of Heaven's discover'd will,
Is, not to have it, or to use it ill.
The danger's much the same; on several shelves
If others wreck us, or we wreck ourselves.
What then remains, but, waiving each extreme,
The tides of ignorance and pride to stem?
Neither so rich a treasure to forego,
Nor proudly seek beyond our power to know:
Faith is not built on disquisitions vain;
The things we must believe are few and plain:
But since men will believe more than they need,
And every man will make himself a creed,
In doubtful questions 'tis the safest way
To learn what unsuspected ancients say:
For 'tis not likely we should higher soar
In search of Heaven, than all the Church before:
Nor can we be deceived, unless we see
The Scripture and the Fathers disagree.
If after all they stand suspected still,
(For no man's faith depends upon his will;)

'Tis some relief, that points not clearly known,
Without much hazard may be let alone:
And after hearing what our Church can say,
If still our reason runs another way,
That private reason 'tis more just to curb,
Than by disputes the public peace disturb.
For points obscure are of small use to learn:
But common quiet is mankind's concern.
Thus have I made my own opinions clear;
Yet neither praise expect nor censure fear:
And this unpolish'd, rugged verse I chose,
As fittest for discourse, and nearest prose:
For while from sacred truth I do not swerve,
Tom Sternhold's, or Tom Shadwell's rhymes will serve.

MAC FLECKNOE.

[Richard Flecknoe, Esq., from whom this poem derives it name, was an Irish priest, who had, according to his own declaration, laid aside the mechanic part of the priesthood. He was well known at court; yet, out of four plays which he wrote, could get only one of them acted, and that was damned. Mr. Thomas Shadwell is the hero of the piece, and introduced, as if pitched upon, by Flecknoe, to succeed him in the throne of dulness; for Flecknoe was never poet-laureat.]

All human things are subject to decay,
And when fate summons, monarchs must obey.
This Flecknoe found, who, like Augustus, young
Was call'd to empire, and had govern'd long;
In prose and verse, was own'd, without dispute,
Through all the realms of Nonsense, absolute.
This aged prince, now flourishing in peace,
And bless'd with issue of a large increase;
Worn out with business, did at length debate
To settle the succession of the state:
And, pondering, which of all his sons was fit
To reign, and wage immortal war with wit,
Cried, "'Tis resolved; for nature pleads, that he
Should only rule, who most resembles me.
Shadwell alone my perfect image bears,
Mature in dulness from his tender years:
Shadwell alone, of all my sons, is he,
Who stands confirm'd in full stupidity.

The rest to some faint meaning make pretence,
But Shadwell never deviates into sense.
Some beams of wit on other souls may fall,
Strike through, and make a lucid interval;
But Shadwell's genuine night admits no ray,
His rising fogs prevail upon the day.
Besides, his goodly fabric fills the eye,
And seems design'd for thoughtless majesty:
Thoughtless as monarch oaks, that shade the plain,
And, spread in solemn state, supinely reign.
Heywood and Shirley were but types of thee,
Thou last great prophet of tautology.
Even I, a dunce of more renown than they,
Was sent before but to prepare thy way
And, coarsely clad in Norwich drugget, came
To teach the nations in thy greater name.
My warbling lute, the lute I whilom strung,
When to king John of Portugal I sung,
Was but the prelude to that glorious day,
When thou on silver Thames didst cut thy way,
With well-timed oars before the royal barge,
Swell'd with the pride of thy celestial charge;
And big with hymn, commander of an host,
The like was ne'er in Epsom blankets toss'd.
Methinks I see the new Arion sail,
The lute still trembling underneath thy nail.
At thy well-sharpen'd thumb from shore to shore
The trebles squeak for fear, the basses roar:
Echoes from Passing-Alley Shadwell call,
And Shadwell they resound from Aston-Hall.
About thy boat the little fishes throng,
As at the morning toast that floats along.
Sometimes, as prince of thy harmonious band,
Thou wield'st thy papers in thy threshing hand.
St. André's feet ne'er kept more equal time,
Not ev'n the feet of thy own Psyche's rhyme:
Though they in number as in sense excel;
So just, so like tautology, they fell,
That, pale with envy, Singleton forswore
The lute and sword, which he in triumph bore,
And vow'd he ne'er would act Villerius more."
Here stopp'd the good old sire, and wept for joy,
In silent raptures of the hopeful boy.

All arguments, but most his plays, persuade,
That for anointed dulness he was made.
Close to the walls which fair Augusta bind,
(The fair Augusta much to fears inclined)
An ancient fabric raised to inform the sight,
There stood of yore, and Barbican it hight:
A watch-tower once; but now, so fate ordains,
Of all the pile an empty name remains:
From its old ruins brothel-houses rise,
Scenes of lewd loves, and of polluted joys,
Where their vast courts the mother-strumpets keep,
And, undisturb'd by watch, in silence sleep.
Near these a nursery erects its head,
Where queens are form'd, and future heroes bred;
Where unfledged actors learn to laugh and cry,
Where infant punks their tender voices try,
And little Maximins the gods defy.
Great Fletcher never treads in buskins here,
Nor greater Jonson dares in socks appear;
But gentle Simkin just reception finds
Amidst this monument of vanish'd minds:
Pure clinches the suburbian muse affords,
And Panton waging harmless war with words.
Here Flecknoe, as a place to fame well known,
Ambitiously design'd his Shadwell's throne.
For ancient Decker prophesied long since,
That in this pile should reign a mighty prince,
Born for a scourge of wit, and flail of sense:
To whom true dulness should some Psyches owe,
But worlds of Misers from his pen should flow;
Humorists and Hypocrites it should produce,
Whole Raymond families, and tribes of Bruce.
Now empress Fame had publish'd the renown
Of Shadwell's coronation through the town.
Roused by report of fame, the nations meet,
From near Bunhill, and distant Watling-street.
No Persian carpets spread the imperial way,
But scatter'd limbs of mangled poets lay:
From dusty shops neglected authors come,
Martyrs of pies, and reliques of the bum.
Much Heywood, Shirley, Ogleby there lay,
But loads of Shadwell almost choked the way.
Bilk'd stationers for yeomen stood prepared,
And Herringman was captain of the guard.

The hoary prince in majesty appear'd,
High on a throne of his own labours rear'd.
At his right hand our young Ascanius sate,
Rome's other hope, and pillar of the state.
His brows thick fogs, instead of glories, grace,
And lambent dulness play'd around his face.
As Hannibal did to the altars come,
Swore by his sire, a mortal foe to Rome;
So Shadwell swore, nor should his vow be vain,
That he till death true dulness would maintain;
And, in his father's right, and realm's defence,
Ne'er to have peace with wit, nor truce with sense.
The king himself the sacred unction made,
As king by office, and as priest by trade.
In his sinister hand, instead of ball,
He placed a mighty mug of potent ale;
Love's kingdom to his right he did convey,
At once his sceptre, and his rule of sway;
Whose righteous lore the prince had practised young,
And from whose loins recorded Psyche sprung.
His temples, last, with poppies were o'erspread,
That nodding seem'd to consecrate his head.
Just at the point of time, if fame not lie,
On his left hand twelve reverend owls did fly.
So Romulus, 'tis sung, by Tyber's brook,
Presage of sway from twice six vultures took.
The admiring throng loud acclamations make,
And omens of his future empire take.
The sire then shook the honours of his head,
And from his brows damps of oblivion shed
Full on the filial dulness: long he stood,
Repelling from his breast the raging god;
At length burst out in this prophetic mood:—
"Heavens bless my son, from Ireland let him reign
To far Barbadoes on the western main;
Of his dominion may no end be known,
And greater than his father's be his throne;
Beyond Love's kingdom let him stretch his pen!"—
He paused, and all the people cried, Amen.
Then thus continued he: "My son, advance
Still in new impudence, new ignorance.
Success let others teach, learn thou from me
Pangs without birth, and fruitless industry.

Let Virtuosos in five years be writ;
Yet not one thought accuse thy toil of wit.
Let gentle George in triumph tread the stage,
Make Dorimant betray, and Loveit rage;
Let Cully, Cockwood, Fopling, charm the pit,
And in their folly show the writer's wit.
Yet still thy fools shall stand in thy defence,
And justify their author's want of sense.
Let them be all by thy own model made
Of dulness, and desire no foreign aid;
That they to future ages may be known,
Not copies drawn, but issue of thy own.
Nay, let thy men of wit too be the same,
All full of thee, and differing but in name.
But let no alien Sedley interpose,
To lard with wit thy hungry Epsom prose.
And when false flowers of rhetoric thou wouldst cull,
Trust nature, do not labour to be dull;
But write thy best, and top; and, in each line,
Sir Formal's oratory will be thine:
Sir Formal, though unsought, attends thy quill,
And does thy northern dedications fill.
Nor let false friends seduce thy mind to fame,
By arrogating Jonson's hostile name.
Let Father Flecknoe fire thy mind with praise,
And uncle Ogleby thy envy raise.
Thou art my blood, where Jonson has no part:
What share have we in nature, or in art?
Where did his wit on learning fix a brand,
And rail at arts he did not understand?
Where made he love in prince Nicander's vein,
Or swept the dust in Psyche's humble strain?
Where sold he bargains, "whip-stitch, kiss my arse,"
Promised a play, and dwindled to a farce?
When did his muse from Fletcher scenes purloin,
As thou whole Etherege dost transfuse to thine?
But so transfused, as oil and waters flow,
His always floats above, thine sinks below.
This is thy province, this thy wondrous way,
New humours to invent for each new play:
This is that boasted bias of thy mind,
By which one way to dulness 'tis inclined:
Which makes thy writings lean on one side still,
And, in all changes, that way bends thy will.

Nor let thy mountain-belly make pretence
Of likeness; thine 's a tympany of sense.
A tun of man in thy large bulk is writ,
But sure thou'rt but a kilderkin of wit.
Like mine, thy gentle numbers feebly creep;
Thy tragic muse gives smiles, thy comic sleep.
With whate'er gall thou sett'st thyself to write,
Thy inoffensive satires never bite.
In thy felonious art though venom lies,
It does but touch thy Irish pen, and dies.
Thy genius calls thee not to purchase fame
In keen Iambics, but mild Anagram.
Leave writing plays, and choose for thy command,
Some peaceful province in Acrostic land.
There thou may'st wings display and altars raise,
And torture one poor word ten thousand ways.
Or, if thou would'st thy different talents suit,
Set thy own songs, and sing them to thy lute."
He said; but his last words were scarcely heard:
For Bruce and Longvil had a trap prepared,
And down they sent the yet declaiming bard.
Sinking he left his drugget robe behind,
Borne upwards by a subterranean wind.
The mantle fell to the young prophet's part,
With double portion of his father's art.

THRENODIA AUGUSTALIS:

A FUNERAL PINDARIC POEM.

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF KING CHARLES II.

THUS long my grief has kept me dumb:
Sure there 's a lethargy in mighty woe,
Tears stand congeal'd, and cannot flow;
And the sad soul retires into her inmost room:
Tears, for a stroke foreseen, afford relief;
But, unprovided for a sudden blow,
Like Niobe we marble grow;
And petrify with grief.
Our British heaven was all serene,
No threatening cloud was nigh,
Not the least wrinkle to deform the sky;
We lived as unconcern'd and happily
As the first age in nature's golden scene;

Supine amidst our flowing store,
We slept securely, and we dreamt of more:
When suddenly the thunder-clap was heard,
It took us unprepared and out of guard,
Already lost before we fear'd.
The amazing news of Charles at once were spread,
At once the general voice declared,
"Our gracious prince was dead."
No sickness known before, no slow disease,
To soften grief by just degrees:
But like an hurricane on Indian seas,
The tempest rose;
An unexpected burst of woes:
With scarce a breathing space betwixt,
This now becalm'd, and perishing the next.
As if great Atlas from his height
Should sink beneath his heavenly weight,
And with a mighty flaw, the flaming wall
(As once it shall,)
Should gape immense, and rushing down, o'erwhelm this nether ball;
So swift and so surprising was our fear:
Out Atlas fell indeed; but Hercules was near.

His pious brother, sure the best
Who ever bore that name,
Was newly risen from his rest,
And, with a fervent flame,
His usual morning vows had just address'd
For his dear sovereign's health;
And hoped to have them heard,
In long increase of years.
In honour, fame, and wealth:
Guiltless of greatness thus he always pray'd,
Nor knew nor wish'd those vows he made
On his own head should be repaid.
Soon as the ill-omen'd rumour reach'd his ear,
(Ill news is wing'd with fate, and flies apace,)
Who can describe the amazement of his face!
Horror in all his pomp was there,
Mute and magnificent without a tear:
And then the hero first was seen to fear.
Half unarray'd he ran to his relief,
So hasty and so artless was his grief:

Approaching greatness met him with her charms
Of power and future state;
But look'd so ghastly in a brother's fate,
He shook her from his arms.
Arrived within the mournful room, he saw
A wild distraction, void of awe,
And arbitrary grief, unbounded by a law.
God's image, God's anointed, lay
Without motion, pulse, or breath,
A senseless lump of sacred clay,
An image, now, of death.
Amidst his sad attendants' groans and cries,
The lines of that adored forgiving face,
Distorted from their native grace;
An iron slumber sat on his majestic eyes.
The pious duke—Forbear, audacious muse,
No terms thy feeble art can use
Are able to adorn so vast a woe:
The grief of all the rest like subject-grief did show,
His like a sovereign did transcend;
No wife, no brother, such a grief could know,
Nor any name, but friend.

O wondrous changes of a fatal scene,
Still varying to the last!
Heaven, though its hard decree was past,
Seem'd pointing to a gracious turn again:
And Death's uplifted arm arrested in its haste.
Heaven half repented of the doom,
And almost grieved it had foreseen,
What by foresight it will'd eternally to come.
Mercy above did hourly plead
For her resemblance here below;
And mild forgiveness intercede
To stop the coming blow.
New miracles approach'd the ethereal throne,
Such as his wondrous life had often lately known,
And urged that still they might be shown.
On earth his pious brother pray'd and vow'd,
Renouncing greatness at so dear a rate,
Himself defending what he could,
From all the glories of his future fate.
With him the innumerable crowd
Of armed prayers

Knock'd at the gates of heaven, and knock'd aloud;
The first well-meaning rude petitioners.
All for his life assail'd the throne,
All would have bribed the skies by offering up their own.
So great a throng not heaven itself could bar;
'Twas almost borne by force as in the giants' war.
The prayers, at least, for his reprieve were heard;
His death, like Hezekiah's, was deferr'd:
Against the sun the shadow went;
Five days, those five degrees, were lent
To form our patience and prepare the event.
The second causes took the swift command,
The medicinal head, the ready hand,
All eager to perform their part;
All but eternal doom was conquer'd by their art:
Once more the fleeting soul came back
To inspire the mortal frame;
And in the body took a doubtful stand,
Doubtful and hovering like expiring flame,
That mounts and falls by turns, and trembles o'er the brand.

The joyful short-lived news soon spread around,
Took the same train, the same impetuous bound:
The drooping town in smiles again was dress'd,
Gladness in every face express'd,
Their eyes before their tongues confess'd.
Men met each other with erected look,
The steps were higher that they took;
Friends to congratulate their friends made haste,
And long inveterate foes saluted as they pass'd:
Above the rest heroic James appear'd
Exalted more because he more had fear'd:
His manly heart, whose noble pride
Was still above
Dissembled hate or varnish'd love,
Its more than common transport could not hide;
But like an eagre rode in triumph o'er the tide.
Thus in alternate course,
The tyrant passions, hope and fear,
Did in extremes appear,
And flash'd upon the soul with equal force.
Thus, at half ebb, a rolling sea

Returns and wins upon the shore;
The watery herd, affrighted at the roar,
Rest on their fins awhile, and stay,
Then backward take their wondering way:
The prophet wonders more than they,
At prodigies but rarely seen before,
And cries, a king must fall, or kingdoms change their sway.
Such were our counter-tides at land, and so
Presaging of the fatal blow,
In their prodigious ebb and flow.
The royal soul, that, like the labouring moon,
By charms of art was hurried down,
Forced with regret to leave her native sphere,
Came but awhile on liking here:
Soon weary of the painful strife,
And made but faint essays of life:
An evening light
Soon shut in night;
A strong distemper, and a weak relief,
Short intervals of joy, and long returns of grief.

The sons of art all medicines tried,
And every noble remedy applied;
With emulation each essay'd
His utmost skill, nay more, they pray'd:
Never was losing game with better conduct play'd.
Death never won a stake with greater toil,
Nor e'er was fate so near a foil:
But like a fortress on a rock,
The impregnable disease their vain attempts did mock;
They mined it near, they batter'd from afar
With all the cannon of the medicinal war;
No gentle means could be essay'd,
'Twas beyond parley when the siege was laid:
The extremest ways they first ordain,
Prescribing such intolerable pain,
As none but Cæsar could sustain:
Undaunted Cæsar underwent
The malice of their art, nor bent
Beneath whate'er their pious rigour could invent:
In five such days he suffer'd more
Than any suffer'd in his reign before;

More, infinitely more, than he,
Against the worst of rebels, could decree,
A traitor, or twice-pardon'd enemy.
Now art was tired without success,
No racks could make the stubborn malady confess.
The vain insurancers of life,
And he who most perform'd and promised less,
Even Short himself forsook the unequal strife.
Death and despair was in their looks,
No longer they consult their memories or books;
Like helpless friends, who view from shore
The labouring ship, and hear the tempest roar;
So stood they with their arms across;
Not to assist, but to deplore
The inevitable loss.

Death was denounced; that frightful sound,
Which even the best can hardly bear,
He took the summons void of fear;
And, unconcernedly, cast his eyes around;
As if to find and dare the grisly challenger.
What death could do he lately tried,
When in four days he more than died.
The same assurance all his words did grace;
The same majestic mildness held its place:
Nor lost the monarch in his dying face.
Intrepid, pious, merciful, and brave,
He look'd as when he conquer'd and forgave.

As if some angel had been sent
To lengthen out his government,
And to foretel as many years again,
As he had number'd in his happy reign,
So cheerfully he took the doom
Of his departing breath;
Nor shrunk nor stept aside for death;
But with unalter'd pace kept on;
Providing for events to come,
When he resign'd the throne.
Still he maintain'd his kingly state;
And grew familiar with his fate.
Kind, good, and gracious, to the last,
On all he loved before his dying beams he cast:
Oh, truly good, and truly great,
For glorious as he rose, benignly so he set!

All that on earth he held most dear,
He recommended to his care,
To whom both Heaven
The right had given,
And his own love bequeath'd supreme command:
He took and press'd that ever-loyal hand,
Which could in peace secure his reign,
Which could in wars his power maintain,
That hand on which no plighted vows were ever vain.
Well for so great a trust he chose
A prince who never disobey'd:
Not when the most severe commands were laid;
Nor want, nor exile with his duty weigh'd:
A prince on whom, if Heaven its eyes could close,
The welfare of the world it safely might repose.

That king who lived to God's own heart,
Yet less serenely died than he:
Charles left behind no harsh decree
For schoolmen with laborious art
To salve from cruelty:
Those, for whom love could no excuses frame,
He graciously forgot to name.
Thus far my muse, though rudely, has design'd
Some faint resemblance of his godlike mind:
But neither pen nor pencil can express
The parting brothers' tenderness:
Though that 's a term too mean and low;
The blest above a kinder word may know:
But what they did, and what they said,
The monarch who triumphant went,
The militant who staid,
Like painters when their height'ning arts are spent
I cast into a shade.
That all-forgiving king,
The type of Him above,
That inexhausted spring
Of clemency and love;
Himself to his next self accused,
And ask'd that pardon which he ne'er refused:
For faults not his, for guilt and crimes
Of godless men, and of rebellious times:
For an hard exile, kindly meant,
When his ungrateful country sent

Their best Camillus into banishment:
And forced their sovereign's act, they could not his consent.
Oh, how much rather had that injured chief
Repeated all his sufferings past!
Than hear a pardon begg'd at last,
Which given could give the dying no relief:
He bent, he sunk beneath his grief:
His dauntless heart would fain have held
From weeping, but his eyes rebell'd.
Perhaps the godlike hero in his breast
Disdain'd, or was ashamed, to show
So weak, so womanish a woe,
Which yet the brother and the friend so plenteously confess'd.

Amidst that silent shower, the royal mind
An easy passage found,
And left its sacred earth behind:
Nor murmuring groan express'd, nor labouring sound,
Nor any least tumultuous breath;
Calm was his life, and quiet was his death.
Soft as those gentle whispers were,
In which the Almighty did appear;
By the still voice the prophet knew him there.
That peace which made thy prosperous reign to shine,
That peace thou leavest to thy imperial line,
That peace, oh happy shade, be ever thine!

For all those joys thy restoration brought,
For all the miracles it wrought,
For all the healing balm thy mercy pour'd
Into the nation's bleeding wound,
And care that after kept it sound,
For numerous blessings yearly shower'd,
And property with plenty crown'd;
For freedom, still maintain'd alive,
Freedom! which in no other land will thrive,
Freedom! an English subject's sole prerogative,
Without whose charms even peace would be
But a dull quiet slavery:
For these and more, accept our pious praise;
'Tis all the subsidy
The present age can raise,

The rest is charged on late posterity.
Posterity is charged the more,
Because the large abounding store
To them and to their heirs is still entail'd by thee.
Succession, of a long descent,
Which chastely in the channels ran,
And from our demi-gods began,
Equal almost to time in its extent;
Through hazards numberless and great,
Thou hast derived this mighty blessing down,
And fix'd the fairest gem that decks the imperial crown.
Not faction, when it shook thy regal seat,
Not senates, insolently loud,
Those echoes of a thoughtless crowd,
Not foreign or domestic treachery,
Could warp thy soul to their unjust decree.
So much thy foes thy manly mind mistook,
Who judged it by the mildness of thy look:
Like a well-temper'd sword it bent at will;
But kept the native toughness of the steel.

Be true, O Clio, to thy hero's name!
But draw him strictly so,
That all who view the piece may know;
He needs no trappings of fictitious fame:
The load 's too weighty: thou may'st choose
Some parts of praise, and some refuse:
Write, that his annals may be thought more lavish than the muse.
In scanty truth thou hast confined
The virtues of a royal mind,
Forgiving, bounteous, humble, just, and kind:
His conversation, wit, and parts,
His knowledge in the noblest useful arts,
Were such, dead authors could not give;
But habitudes of those who live;
Who, lighting him, did greater lights receive:
He drain'd from all, and all they knew;
His apprehension quick, his judgment true:
That the most learn'd, with shame, confess
His knowledge more, his reading only less.

Amidst the peaceful triumphs of his reign,
What wonder if the kindly beams he shed
Revived the drooping arts again,

If Science raised her head,
And soft Humanity that from rebellion fled:
Our isle, indeed, too fruitful was before;
But all uncultivated lay
Out of the solar walk and heaven's high way;
With rank Geneva weeds run o'er,
And cockle, at the best, amidst the corn it bore:
The royal husbandman appear'd,
And plough'd, and sow'd, and till'd;
The thorns he rooted out, the rubbish clear'd,
And bless'd the obedient field.
When straight a double harvest rose;
Such as the swarthy Indian mows;
Or happier climates near the line,
Or paradise, manured and drest by hands divine.

As when the new-born phœnix takes his way,
His rich paternal regions to survey,
Of airy choristers a numerous train
Attend his wondrous progress o'er the plain;
So, rising from his father's urn,
So glorious did our Charles return.
The officious Muses came along,
A gay harmonious choir, like angels, ever young:
The Muse that mourns him now his happy triumph sung.
Even they could thrive in his auspicious reign;
And such a plenteous crop they bore
Of purest and well-winnow'd grain,
As Britain never knew before.
Though little was their hire, and light their gain,
Yet somewhat to their share he threw;
Fed from his hand they sung and flew,
Like birds of paradise that lived on morning dew.
Oh, never let their lays his name forget!
The pension of a prince's praise is great.
Live then, thou great encourager of arts,
Live ever in our thankful hearts;
Live blest above, almost invoked below;
Live, and receive this pious vow,
Our patron once, our guardian angel now.
Thou Fabius of a sinking state,
Who didst by wise delays, divert our fate,
When faction, like a tempest rose,
In death's most hideous form,

Then art to rage thou didst oppose,
To weather out the storm:
Not quitting thy supreme command,
Thou held'st the rudder with a steady hand,
Till safely on the shore the bark did land:
The bark that all our blessings brought,
Charged with thyself and James, a doubly royal fraught.

Oh frail estate of human things,
And slippery hopes below!
Now to our cost your emptiness we know;
For 'tis a lesson dearly bought,
Assurance here is never to be sought.
The best, and best beloved of kings,
And best deserving to be so,
When scarce he had escaped the fatal blow
Of faction and conspiracy,
Death did his promised hopes destroy:
He toil'd, he gain'd, but lived not to enjoy.
What mists of Providence are these
Through which we cannot see!
So saints, by supernatural power set free,
Are left at last in martyrdom to die;
Such is the end of oft-repeated miracles.
Forgive me, Heaven, that impious thought;
'Twas grief for Charles, to madness wrought,
That question'd thy supreme decree!
Thou didst his gracious reign prolong,
Even in thy saints' and angels' wrong,
His fellow-citizens of immortality:
For twelve long years of exile borne,
Twice twelve we number'd since his blest return:
So strictly wert thou just to pay,
Even to the driblet of a day.
Yet still we murmur and complain
The quails and manna should no longer rain;
Those miracles 'twas needless to renew;
The chosen flock has now the promised land in view.

A warlike prince ascends the regal state,
A prince long exercised by fate:
Long may he keep, though he obtains it late.
Heroes in Heaven's peculiar mould are cast,
They and their poets are not form'd in haste;
Man was the first in God's design, and man was made the last

False heroes, made by flattery so,
Heaven can strike out, like sparkles, at a blow;
But ere a prince is to perfection brought,
He costs Omnipotence a second thought.
With toil and sweat,
With hardening cold, and forming heat,
The Cyclops did their strokes repeat,
Before the impenetrable shield was wrought.
It looks as if the Maker would not own
The noble work for his,
Before 'twas tried and found a masterpiece.

View then a monarch ripen'd for a throne.
Alcides thus his race began,
O'er infancy he swiftly ran;
The future god at first was more than man:
Dangers and toils, and Juno's hate,
Even o'er his cradle lay in wait;
And there he grappled first with fate:
In his young hands the hissing snakes he press'd,
So early was the deity confess'd;
Thus by degrees he rose
To Jove's imperial seat;
Thus difficulties prove a soul legitimately great.
Like his, our hero's infancy was tried:
Betimes the furies did their snakes provide;
And to his infant arms oppose
His father's rebels, and his brother's foes;
The more opprest, the higher still he rose;
Those were the preludes of his fate,
That form'd his manhood, to subdue
The hydra of a many-headed hissing crew.

As after Numa's peaceful reign
The martial Ancus did the sceptre wield,
Furbish'd the rusty sword again,
Resumed the long-forgotten shield,
And led the Latins to the dusty field;
So James the drowsy genius wakes
Of Britain, long entranced in charms,
Restive and slumbering on its arms:
'Tis roused, and with a new-strung nerve the spear already shakes.
No neighing of the warrior steeds,
No drum, or louder trumpet, needs

To inspire the coward, warm the cold;
His voice, his sole appearance, makes them bold.
Gaul and Batavia dread the impending blow;
Too well the vigour of that arm they know;
They lick the dust, and crouch beneath their fatal foe.
Long may they fear this awful prince,
And not provoke his lingering sword;
Peace is their only sure defence,
Their best security his word.
In all the changes of his doubtful state,
His truth, like Heaven's, was kept inviolate.
For him to promise is to make it fate.
His valour can triumph o'er land and main;
With broken oaths his fame he will not stain;
With conquest basely bought, and with inglorious gain.

For once, O Heaven, unfold thy adamantine book;
And let his wondering senate see,
If not thy firm immutable decree,
At least the second page of strong contingency;
Such as consists with wills originally free:
Let them with glad amazement look
On what their happiness may be:
Let them not still be obstinately blind,
Still to divert the good thou hast design'd,
Or with malignant penury,
To starve the royal virtues of his mind.
Faith is a Christian's and a subject's test;
Oh, give them to believe, and they are surely blest.
They do; and with a distant view I see
The amended vows of English loyalty.
And all beyond that object, there appears
The long retinue of a prosperous reign,
A series of successful years,
In orderly array, a martial, manly train.
Behold ev'n the remoter shores,
A conquering navy proudly spread;
The British cannon formidably roars;
While starting from his oozy bed,
The asserted Ocean rears his reverend head,
To view and recognize his ancient lord again;
And with a willing hand restores
The fasces of the main.

THE HIND AND THE PANTHER.

A POEM. IN THREE PARTS.

PREFACE.

THE nation is in *too* high a ferment for me to expect either fair war, or even so much as fair quarter, from a reader of the opposite party. All men are engaged either on this side or that; and though Conscience is the common *Word*, which is given by both, yet if a writer fall among enemies, and cannot give the marks of *their* conscience, he is knocked down before the reasons of his own are heard. A preface, therefore, which is but a bespeaking of favour, is altogether useless. What I desire the reader should know concerning me, he will find in the body of the poem, if he have but the patience to peruse it. Only this advertisement let him take beforehand, which relates to the merits of the cause. No general characters of parties (call them either Sects or Churches) can be so fully and exactly drawn, as to comprehend all the several members of them; at least all such as are received under that denomination. For example: there are some of the Church by law established who envy not liberty of conscience to Dissenters; as being well satisfied that, according to their own principles, they ought not to persecute them. Yet these, by reason of their fewness, I could not distinguish from the numbers of the rest, with whom they are embodied in one common name. On the other side, there are many of our Sects, and more indeed than I could reasonably have hoped, who have withdrawn themselves from the communion of the Panther, and embraced this gracious indulgence of his Majesty in point of toleration. But neither to the one nor the other of these is this satire any way intended: it is aimed only at the refractory and disobedient on either side. For those who are come over to the royal party are consequently supposed to be out of gun-shot. Our physicians have observed, that, in process of time, some diseases have abated of their virulence, and have in a manner worn out their malignity, so as to be no longer mortal; and why may not I suppose the same concerning some of those who have formerly been enemies to Kingly Government, as well as Catholic Religion? I hope they have now another notion of both, as having found, by comfortable experience, that the doctrine of persecution is far from being an article of our faith.

It is not for any private man to censure the proceedings of a foreign prince; but without suspicion of flattery, I may praise our own, who has taken contrary measures, and those more suitable to the spirit of Christianity. Some of the Dissenters, in their addresses to his Majesty, have said, "That he has

restored God to his empire over conscience." I confess I dare not stretch the figure to so great a boldness; but I may safely say, that conscience is the royalty and prerogative of every private man. He is absolute in his own breast, and accountable to no earthly power for that which passes only betwixt God and him. Those who are driven into the fold are, generally speaking, rather made hypocrites than converts.

This indulgence being granted to all the sects, it ought in reason to be expected that they should both receive it, and receive it thankfully. For, at this time of day, to refuse the benefit, and adhere to those whom they have esteemed their persecutors, what is it else but publicly to own that they suffered not before for conscience sake, but only out of pride and obstinacy, to separate from a Church for those impositions which they now judge may be lawfully obeyed? After they have so long contended for their classical ordination (not to speak of rites and ceremonies), will they at length submit to an episcopal? If they can go so far, out of complaisance to their old enemies, methinks a little reason should persuade them to take another step, and see whither that would lead them.

Of the receiving this toleration thankfully I shall say no more, than that they ought, and I doubt not, they will, consider from what hands they received it. It is not from a Cyrus, a heathen prince, and a foreigner, but from a Christian king, their native sovereign, who expects a return in specie from them, that the kindness which he has graciously shown them may be retaliated on those of his own persuasion.

As for the poem in general, I will only thus far satisfy the reader, that it was neither imposed on me, nor so much as the subject given me by any man. It was written during the last winter, and the beginning of this spring, though with long interruptions of ill-health and other hindrances. About a fortnight before I had finished it, his Majesty's declaration for liberty of conscience came abroad; which, if I had so soon expected, I might have spared myself the labour of writing many things which are contained in the third part of it. But I was always in some hope, that the Church of England might have been persuaded to have taken off the Penal Laws and the Test, which was one design of the poem when I proposed to myself the writing of it.

It is evident that some part of it was only occasional, and not first intended: I mean that defence of myself, to which every honest man is bound, when he is injuriously attacked in print; and I refer myself to the judgment of those who have read the Answer to the Defence of the late King's papers and that of the Duchess (in which last I was concerned) how charitably I have been represented there. I am now informed both of the author and supervisers of his pamphlet, and will reply when I think

he can affront me: for I am of Socrates' opinion, that all creatures cannot. In the mean time let him consider whether he deserved not a more severe reprehension than I gave him formerly, for using so little respect to the memory of those whom he pretended to answer; and at his leisure look out for some original treatise of Humility, written by any Protestant in English (I believe I may say in any other tongue): for the magnified piece of Duncomb on that subject, which either he must mean or none, and with which another of his fellows has upbraided me, was translated from the Spanish of Rodriguez; though with the omission of the seventeenth, the twenty-fourth, the twenty-fifth, and the last chapter, which will be found in comparing of the books.

He would have insinuated to the world that her late Highness died not a Roman Catholic. He declares himself to be now satisfied to the contrary, in which he has given up the cause; for matter of fact was the principal debate betwixt us. In the mean time, he would dispute the motives of her change; how preposterously, let all men judge, when he seemed to deny the subject of the controversy, the change itself. And because I would not take up this ridiculous challenge, he tells the world I cannot argue: but he may as well infer that a Catholic cannot fast, because he will not take up the cudgels against Mrs. James, to confute the Protestant religion.

I have but one word more to say concerning the poem as such, and abstracting from the matters, either religious or civil, which are handled in it. The first part, consisting most in general characters and narration, I have endeavoured to raise, and give it the majestic turn of heroic poesy. The second, being matter of dispute, and chiefly concerning Church Authority, I was obliged to make as plain and perspicuous as possibly I could; yet not wholly neglecting the numbers, though I had not frequent occasions for the magnificence of verse. The third, which has more of the nature of domestic conversation, is, or ought to be, more free and familiar than the two former.

There are in it two Episodes, or Fables, which are interwoven with the main design; so that they are properly parts of it, though they are also distinct stories of themselves. In both of these I have made use of the common-places of Satire, whether true or false, which are urged by the members of the one Church against the other: at which I hope no reader of either party will be scandalized, because they are not of my invention, but as old, to my knowledge, as the times of Boccace and Chaucer on the one side, and as those of the Reformation on the other.

THE HIND AND THE PANTHER.

[This piece is a defence of the Roman Catholic Church, by way of dialogue between a Hind, who represents the Church of Rome, and a Panther, who sustains the character of the Church of England. These two beasts very learnedly debate the principal points controverted between the two Churches, as transubstantiation, infallibility, church-authority, &c.]

A MILK-WHITE Hind, immortal and unchanged,
Fed on the lawns, and in the forest ranged;
Without unspotted, innocent within,
She fear'd no danger, for she knew no sin.
Yet had she oft been chased with horns and hounds,
And Scythian shafts and many winged wounds
Aim'd at her heart, was often forced to fly,
And doom'd to death though fated not to die.
Not so her young; for their unequal line
Was hero's make, half human, half divine.
Their earthly mould obnoxious was to fate,
The immortal part assumed immortal state.
Of these a slaughter'd army lay in blood,
Extended o'er the Caledonian wood,
Their native walk; whose vocal blood arose,
And cried for pardon on their perjured foes.
Their fate was fruitful, and the sanguine seed,
Endued with souls, increased the sacred breed.
So captive Israel multiplied in chains,
A numerous exile, and enjoy'd her pains.
With grief and gladness mix'd, the mother view'd
Her martyr'd offspring, and their race renew'd;
Their corpse to perish, but their kind to last,
So much the deathless plant the dying fruit surpass'd.
Panting and pensive now she ranged alone,
And wander'd in the kingdoms, once her own.
The common hunt, though from their rage restrain'd
By sovereign power, her company disdain'd;
Grinn'd as they pass'd, and with a glaring eye
Gave gloomy signs of secret enmity.
'Tis true she bounded by, and tripp'd so light,
They had not time to take a steady sight.
For truth has such a face and such a mien,
As to be loved needs only to be seen.
The bloody Bear, an independent beast,
Unlick'd to form, in groans her hate express'd.

Among the timorous kind the quaking Hare
Profess'd neutrality, but would not swear.
Next her the buffoon Ape, as atheists use,
Mimick'd all sects, and had his own to choose:
Still when the Lion look'd, his knees he bent,
And paid at church a courtier's compliment.
The bristled Baptist Boar, impure as he,
(But whiten'd with the foam of sanctity,)
With fat pollutions fill'd the sacred place,
And mountains levell'd in his furious race;
So first rebellion founded was in grace.
But since the mighty ravage, which he made
In German forests, had his guilt betray'd,
With broken tusks, and with a borrow'd name,
He shunn'd the vengeance, and conceal'd the shame;
So lurk'd in sects unseen. With greater guile
False Reynard fed on consecrated spoil:
The graceless beast by Athanasius first
Was chased from Nice; then, by Socinus nursed,
His impious race their blasphemy renew'd,
And nature's King through nature's optics view'd.
Reversed they view'd him lessen'd to their eye,
Nor in an infant could a God descry:
New swarming sects to this obliquely tend,
Hence they began, and here they all will end.
What weight of ancient witness can prevail,
If private reason hold the public scale?
But, gracious God! how well dost thou provide
For erring judgments an unerring guide!
Thy throne is darkness in the abyss of light,
A blaze of glory that forbids the sight.
Oh, teach me to believe thee thus concealed,
And search no further than thyself revealed;
But her alone for my director take,
Whom thou hast promised never to forsake!
My thoughtless youth was wing'd with vain desires;
My manhood, long misled by wandering fires,
Follow'd false lights; and, when their glimpse was gone,
My pride struck out new sparkles of her own.
Such was I, such by nature still I am;
Be thine the glory, and be mine the shame.
Good life be now my task: my doubts are done:
What more could fright my faith, than three in one?

Can I believe eternal God could lie
Disguised in mortal mould and infancy?
That the great Maker of the world could die?
And after that, trust my imperfect sense,
Which calls in question his omnipotence?
Can I my reason to my faith compel?
And shall my sight, and touch, and taste, rebel?
Superior faculties are set aside;
Shall their subservient organs be my guide?
Then let the moon usurp the rule of day,
And winking tapers show the sun his way;
For what my senses can themselves perceive,
I need no revelation to believe.
Can they who say the Host should be descried
By sense, define a body glorified?
Impassable, and penetrating parts?
Let them declare by what mysterious arts
He shot that body through the opposing might
Of bolts and bars impervious to the light,
And stood before his train confess'd in open sight.
For since thus wondrously he pass'd, 'tis plain
One single place two bodies did contain.
And sure the same Omnipotence as well
Can make one body in more places dwell.
Let reason then at her own quarry fly,
But how can finite grasp infinity?
'Tis urged again, that faith did first commence
By miracles, which are appeals to sense,
And thence concluded, that our sense must be
The motive still of credibility.
For latter ages must on former wait,
And what began belief, must propagate.
But winnow well this thought, and you shall find
'Tis light as chaff that flies before the wind.
Were all those wonders wrought by power divine,
As means or ends of some more deep design?
Most sure as means, whose end was this alone,
To prove the Godhead of the eternal Son.
God thus asserted, man is to believe
Beyond what sense and reason can conceive,
And for mysterious things of faith rely
On the proponent, Heaven's authority.
If then our faith we for our guide admit,
Vain is the farther search of human wit,

As when the building gains a surer stay,
We take the unuseful scaffolding away.
Reason by sense no more can understand;
The game is play'd into another hand;
Why choose we then, like bilanders, to creep
Along the coast, and land in view to keep,
When safely we may launch into the deep?
In the same vessel which our Saviour bore,
Himself the pilot, let us leave the shore,
And with a better guide a better world explore.
Could he his Godhead veil with flesh and blood,
And not veil these again to be our food?
His grace in both is equal in extent;
The first affords us life, the second nourishment.
And if he can, why all this frantic pain
To construe what his clearest words contain,
And make a riddle what he made so plain?
To take up half on trust, and half to try,
Name it not faith, but bungling bigotry.
Both knave and fool the merchant we may call,
To pay great sums, and to compound the small:
For who would break with Heaven, and would not break [for all?
Rest then, my soul, from endless anguish freed:
Nor sciences thy guide, nor sense thy creed.
Faith is the best ensurer of thy bliss;
The bank above must fail before the venture miss.
But heaven and heaven-born faith are far from thee,
Thou first apostate to divinity.
Unkennell'd range in thy Polonian plains;
A fiercer foe the insatiate Wolf remains.
Too boastful Britain, please thyself no more,
That beasts of prey are banish'd from thy shore:
The Bear, the Boar, and every savage name,
Wild in effect, though in appearance tame,
Lay waste thy woods, destroy thy blissful bower,
And, muzzled though they seem, the mutes devour.
More haughty than the rest, the wolfish race
Appear with belly gaunt, and famish'd face;
Never was so deform'd a beast of grace.
His ragged tail betwixt his legs he wears,
Close laid for shame; but his rough crest he rears,
And pricks up his predestinating ears.
His wild disorder'd walk, his haggard eyes,
Did all the bestial citizens surprise:

Though fear'd and hated, yet he ruled awhile,
As captain or companion of the spoil.
Full many a year his hateful head had been
For tribute paid, nor since in Cambria seen:
The last of all the litter 'scaped by chance,
And from Geneva first infested France.
Some authors thus his pedigree will trace,
But others write him of an upstart race;
Because of Wickliff's brood no mark he brings,
But his innate antipathy to kings.
These last deduce him from the Helvetian kind,
Who near the Leman lake his consort lined:
That fiery Zuinglius first the affection bred,
And meagre Calvin bless'd the nuptial bed.
In Israel some believe him whelp'd long since,
When the proud Sanhedrim oppress'd the prince,
Or, since he will be Jew, derive him higher,
When Corah with his brethren did conspire
From Moses' hand the sovereign sway to wrest,
And Aaron of his ephod to divest:
Till opening earth made way for all to pass,
And could not bear the burden of a class.
The Fox and he came shuffled in the dark,
If ever they were stow'd in Noah's ark:
Perhaps not made; for all their barking train
The Dog (a common species) will contain.
And some wild curs, who from their masters ran,
Abhorring the supremacy of man,
In woods and caves the rebel-race began.

O happy pair, how well have you increased!
What ills in Church and State have you redress'd!
With teeth untried, and rudiments of claws,
Your first essay was on your native laws:
Those having torn with ease, and trampled down,
Your fangs you fasten'd on the mitred crown,
And freed from God and monarchy your town.
What though your native kennel still be small,
Bounded betwixt a puddle and a wall;
Yet your victorious colonies are sent
Where the north ocean girds the continent.
Quicken'd with fire below, your monsters breed
In fenny Holland, and in fruitful Tweed:
And, like the first, the last affects to be
Drawn to the dregs of a democracy.

As, where in fields the fairy rounds are seen,
A rank sour herbage rises on the green;
So, springing where those midnight elves advance,
Rebellion prints the footsteps of the dance.
Such are their doctrines, such contempt they show
To Heaven above, and to their prince below,
As none but traitors and blasphemers know.
God, like the tyrant of the skies, is placed,
And kings, like slaves, beneath the crowd debased.
So fulsome is their food, that flocks refuse
To bite, and only dogs for physic use.
As, where the lightning runs along the ground,
No husbandry can heal the blasting wound,
Nor bladed grass, nor bearded corn succeeds,
But scales of scurf and putrefaction breeds:
Such wars, such waste, such fiery tracts of dearth
Their zeal has left, and such a teemless earth.
But, as the poisons of the deadliest kind
Are to their own unhappy coasts confined;
As only Indian shades of sight deprive,
And magic plants will but in Colchos thrive;
So Presbytery and pestilential zeal
Can only flourish in a commonweal.
From Celtic woods is chased the wolfish crew;
But ah! some pity e'en to brutes is due:
Their native walks, methinks, they might enjoy,
Curb'd of their native malice to destroy.
Of all the tyrannies on human kind,
The worst is that which persecutes the mind.
Let us but weigh at what offence we strike;
'Tis but because we cannot think alike.
In punishing of this, we overthrow
The laws of nations and of nature too.
Beasts are the subjects of tyrannic sway,
Where still the stronger on the weaker prey.
Man only of a softer mould is made,
Not for his fellows' ruin, but their aid:
Created kind, beneficent and free,
The noble image of the Deity.
One portion of informing fire was given
To brutes, the inferior family of Heaven:
The Smith Divine, as with a careless beat,
Struck out the mute creation at a heat:

But, when arrived at last to human race,
The Godhead took a deep considering space;
And, to distinguish man from all the rest,
Unlock'd the sacred treasures of his breast;
And mercy mix'd with reason did impart,
One to his head, the other to his heart:
Reason to rule, but mercy to forgive:
The first is law, the last prerogative.
And like his mind his outward form appear'd,
When, issuing naked, to the wondering herd,
He charm'd their eyes; and, for they loved, they fear'd:
Not arm'd with horns of arbitrary might,
Or claws to seize their furry spoils in fight,
Or with increase of feet to o'ertake them in their flight:
Of easy shape, and pliant every way;
Confessing still the softness of his clay,
And kind as kings upon their coronation day:
With open hands, and with extended space
Of arms, to satisfy a large embrace.
Thus kneaded up with milk, the new-made man
His kingdom o'er his kindred world began:
Till knowledge misapplied, misunderstood,
And pride of empire sour'd his balmy blood.
Then, first rebelling, his own stamp he coins;
The murderer Cain was latent in his loins:
And blood began its first and loudest cry,
For differing worship of the Deity.
Thus persecution rose, and farther space
Produced the mighty hunter of his race.
Not so the blessed Pan his flock increased,
Content to fold them from the famish'd beast:
Mild were his laws; the Sheep and harmless Hind
Were never of the persecuting kind.
Such pity now the pious pastor shows,
Such mercy from the British Lion flows,
That both provide protection from their foes.
  Oh happy regions, Italy and Spain,
Which never did those monsters entertain!
The Wolf, the Bear, the Boar, can there advance
No native claim of just inheritance;
And self-preserving laws, severe in show,
May guard their fences from the invading foe.
Where birth has placed them, let them safely share
The common benefit of vital air.

Themselves unharmful, let them live unharm'd;
Their jaws disabled and their claws disarm'd:
Here, only in nocturnal howlings bold,
They dare not seize the Hind, nor leap the fold.
More powerful, and as vigilant as they,
The Lion awfully forbids the prey.
Their rage repress'd though pinch'd with famine sore,
They stand aloof, and tremble at his roar:
Much is their hunger, but their fear is more.
These are the chief: to number o'er the rest,
And stand, like Adam, naming every beast,
Were weary work:—nor will the Muse describe
A slimy-born and sun-begotten tribe;
Who, far from steeples, and their sacred sound,
In fields their sullen conventicles found.
These gross, half-animated lumps I leave;
Nor can I think what thoughts they can conceive:
But if they think at all, 'tis sure no higher
Than matter, put in motion, may aspire:
Souls that can scarce ferment their mass of clay,
So drossy, so divisible are they,
As would but serve pure bodies for allay:
Such souls as shards produce, such beetle things
As only buzz to heaven with evening wings;
Strike in the dark, offending but by chance,
Such are the blindfold blows of ignorance.
They know not beings, and but hate a name;
To them the Hind and Panther are the same.
The Panther, sure the noblest, next the Hind,
And fairest creature of the spotted kind;
Oh, could her in-born stains be wash'd away,
She were too good to be a beast of prey!
How can I praise, or blame, and not offend,
Or how divide the frailty from the friend?
Her faults and virtues lie so mix'd, that she
Nor wholly stands condemn'd, nor wholly free.
Then, like her injured Lion, let me speak;
He cannot bend her, and he would not break.
Unkind already, and estranged in part,
The Wolf begins to share her wandering heart:
Though unpolluted yet with actual ill,
She half commits, who sins but in her will.
If, as our dreaming Platonists report,
There could be spirits of a middle sort,

Too black for heaven, and yet too white for hell,
Who just dropp'd half-way down, nor lower fell;
So poised, so gently she descends from high,
It seems a soft dismission from the sky.
Her house not ancient, whatsoe'er pretence
Her clergy heralds make in her defence;
A second century not half-way run,
Since the new honours of her blood begun.
A Lion, old, obscene, and furious made
By lust, compress'd her mother in a shade;
Then, by a left-hand marriage, weds the dame,
Covering adultery with a specious name:
So Schism begot; and Sacrilege and she,
A well-match'd pair, got graceless Heresy.
God's and kings' rebels have the same good cause,
To trample down divine and human laws:
Both would be call'd reformers, and their hate
Alike destructive both to Church and State:
The fruit proclaims the plant; a lawless prince
By luxury reform'd incontinence;
By ruins, charity; by riots, abstinence.
Confessions, fasts, and penance set aside;
Oh, with what ease we follow such a guide,
Where souls are starved, and senses gratified!
Where marriage-pleasures midnight prayer supply,
And matin bells (a melancholy cry)
Are tuned to merrier notes, increase and multiply.
Religion shows a rosy-colour'd face;
Not hatter'd out with drudging works of grace:
A down-hill reformation rolls apace.
What flesh and blood would crowd the narrow gate,
Or, till they waste their pamper'd paunches, wait?
All would be happy at the cheapest rate.
  Though our lean faith these rigid laws has given,
The full-fed Mussulman goes fat to heaven;
For his Arabian prophet with delights
Of sense allured his eastern proselytes.
The jolly Luther, reading him, began
To interpret Scriptures by his Al-coran;
To grub the thorns beneath our tender feet,
And make the paths of Paradise more sweet:
Bethought him of a wife ere half-way gone,
(For 'twas uneasy travelling alone,)

And, in this masquerade of mirth and love,
Mistook the bliss of heaven for Bacchanals above.
Sure he presumed of praise, who came to stock
The ethereal pastures with so fair a flock,
Burnish'd, and battening on their food, to show
Their diligence of careful herds below.
Our Panther, though like these she changed her head,
Yet, as the mistress of a monarch's bed,
Her front erect with majesty she bore,
The crosier wielded, and the mitre wore.
Her upper part of decent discipline
Show'd affectation of an ancient line;
And Fathers, Councils, Church, and Church's head,
Were on her reverend phylacteries read.
But what disgraced and disavow'd the rest,
Was Calvin's brand, that stigmatised the beast.
Thus, like a creature of a double kind,
In her own labyrinth she lives confined.
To foreign lands no sound of her is come,
Humbly content to be despised at home.
Such is her faith, where good cannot be had,
At least she leaves the refuse of the bad:
Nice in her choice of ill, though not of best,
And least deform'd, because reform'd the least.
In doubtful points betwixt her differing friends,
Where one for substance, one for sign contends,
Their contradicting terms she strives to join;
Sign shall be substance, substance shall be sign.
A real presence all her sons allow,
And yet 'tis flat idolatry to bow,
Because the Godhead's there they know not how.
Her novices are taught that bread and wine
Are but the visible and outward sign,
Received by those who in communion join.
But the inward grace, or the thing signified,
His blood and body, who to save us died;
The faithful this thing signified receive;
What is 't those faithful then partake or leave?
For what is signified and understood,
Is, by her own confession, flesh and blood.
Then, by the same acknowledgment, we know
They take the sign, and take the substance too.
The literal sense is hard to flesh and blood,
But nonsense never can be understood.

Her wild belief on every wave is toss'd;
But sure no church can better morals boast:
True to her king her principles are found;
Oh, that her practice were but half so sound!
Steadfast in various turns of state she stood,
And seal'd her vow'd affection with her blood:
Nor will I meanly tax her constancy,
That interest or obligement made the tie,
Bound to the fate of murder'd monarchy.
Before the sounding axe so falls the vine,
Whose tender branches round the poplar twine;
She chose her ruin, and resign'd her life,
In death undaunted as an Indian wife.
A rare example! but some souls we see
Grow hard, and stiffen with adversity.
Yet these by fortune's favours are undone;
Resolved, into a baser form they run,
And bore the wind, but cannot bear the sun.
Let this be Nature's frailty, or her fate,
Or the Wolf's counsel, her new-chosen mate;
Still she's the fairest of the fallen crew,
No mother more indulgent, but the true.
Fierce to her foes, yet fears her force to try,
Because she wants innate authority;
For how can she constrain them to obey,
Who has herself cast off the lawful sway?
Rebellion equals all, and those, who toil
In common theft, will share the common spoil.
Let her produce the title and the right
Against her old superiors first to fight;
If she reform my text, e'en that's as plain
For her own rebels to reform again,
As long as words a different sense will bear,
And each may be his own interpreter,
Our airy faith will no foundation find:
The word's a weathercock for every wind:
The Bear, the Fox, the Wolf, by turns prevail;
The most in power supplies the present gale.
The wretched Panther cries aloud for aid
To Church and Councils, whom she first betray'd;
No help from Fathers or Tradition's train:
Those ancient guides she taught us to disdain,
And by that Scripture, which she once abused
To reformation, stands herself accused.

What bills for breach of laws can she prefer,
Expounding which she owns herself may err?
And, after all her winding ways are tried,
If doubts arise, she slips herself aside,
And leaves the private conscience for the guide.
If then that conscience set the offender free,
It bars her claim to Church authority.
How can she censure, or what crime pretend,
But Scripture may be construed to defend?
E'en those, whom for rebellion she transmits
To civil power, her doctrine first acquits;
Because no disobedience can ensue,
Where no submission to a judge is due;
Each judging for himself, by her consent,
Whom thus absolved she sends to punishment.
Suppose the magistrate revenge her cause,
'Tis only for transgressing human laws.
How answering to its end a Church is made,
Whose power is but to counsel and persuade?
Oh solid rock, on which secure she stands!
Eternal house, not built with mortal hands!
Oh sure defence against the infernal gate,
A patent during pleasure of the state!
Thus is the Panther neither loved nor fear'd,
A meer mock queen of a divided herd;
Whom soon by lawful power she might control,
Herself a part submitted to the whole.
Then, as the moon who first receives the light
By which she makes our nether regions bright,
So might she shine, reflecting from afar
The rays she borrow'd from a better star;
Big with the beams, which from her mother flow,
And reigning o'er the rising tides below:
Now, mixing with a savage crowd, she goes,
And meanly flatters her inveterate foes,
Ruled while she rules, and losing every hour
Her wretched remnants of precarious power.
One evening, while the cooler shade she sought,
Revolving many a melancholy thought,
Alone she walk'd, and look'd around in vain,
With rueful visage, for her vanish'd train:
None of her sylvan subjects made their court;
Levées and couchées pass'd without resort.

So hardly can usurpers manage well
Those whom they first instructed to rebel.
More liberty begets desire for more;
The hunger still increases with the store.
Without respect they brush'd along the wood,
Each in his clan, and, fill'd with loathsome food,
Ask'd no permission to the neighbouring flood.
The Panther, full of inward discontent,
Since they would go, before them wisely went;
Supplying want of power by drinking first;
As if she gave them leave to quench their thirst.
Among the rest, the Hind, with fearful face,
Beheld from far the common watering-place,
Nor durst approach; till with an awful roar
The sovereign Lion bade her fear no more.
Encouraged thus, she brought her younglings nigh,
Watching the motions of her patron's eye,
And drank a sober draught; the rest, amazed,
Stood mutely still, and on the stranger gazed;
Survey'd her part by part, and sought to find
The ten-horn'd monster in the harmless Hind,
Such as the Wolf and Panther had design'd.
They thought at first they dream'd; for 'twas offence
With them to question certitude of sense,
Their guide in faith: but nearer when they drew,
And had the faultless object full in view,
Lord, how they all admired her heavenly hue!
Some, who before her fellowship disdain'd,
Scarce, and but scarce, from in-born rage restrain'd,
Now frisk'd about her, and old kindred feign'd.
Whether for love or interest, every sect
Of all the savage nation show'd respect.
The viceroy Panther could not awe the herd;
The more the company, the less they fear'd.
The surly Wolf with secret envy burst,
Yet could not howl; the Hind had seen him first:
But what he durst not speak, the Panther durst.
For when the herd, sufficed, did late repair
To ferny heaths, and to their forest lair,
She made a mannerly excuse to stay,
Proffering the Hind to wait her half the way:
That, since the sky was clear, an hour of talk
Might help her to beguile the tedious walk.

With much good-will the motion was embraced,
To chat a while on their adventures past:
Nor had the grateful Hind so soon forgot
Her friend and fellow-sufferer in the plot.
Yet wondering how of late she grew estranged,
Her forehead cloudy, and her countenance changed,
She thought this hour the occasion would present
To learn her secret cause of discontent,
Which well she hoped might be with ease redress'd,
Considering her a well-bred civil beast,
And more a gentlewoman than the rest.
After some common talk what rumours ran,
The lady of the spotted muff began.

THE SECOND PART.

'DAME, (said the Panther,) times are mended well,
Since late among the Philistines you fell.
The toils were pitch'd, a spacious tract of ground
With expert huntsmen was encompass'd round;
The inclosure narrow'd, the sagacious power
Of hounds and death drew nearer every hour:
'Tis true, the younger Lion 'scaped the snare,
But all your priestly calves lay struggling there,
As sacrifices on their altars laid,
While you, their careful mother, wisely fled,
Not trusting destiny to save your head.
For, whate'er promises you have applied
To your unfailing Church, the surer side
Is four fair legs in danger to provide.
And whate'er tales of Peter's chair you tell,
Yet, saving reverence of the miracle,
The better luck was yours to 'scape so well.'
'As I remember, (said the sober Hind,)
These toils were for your own dear self design'd,
As well as me; and with the self-same throw,
To catch the quarry and the vermin too.
(Forgive the slanderous tongues that call'd you so.)
Howe'er you take it now, the common cry
Then ran you down for your rank loyalty.
Besides, in Popery they thought you nursed,
(As evil tongues will ever speak the worst,)
Because some forms, and ceremonies some
You kept, and stood in the main question dumb.

Dumb you were born indeed; but thinking long,
The Test, it seems, at last has loosed your tongue.
And to explain what your forefathers meant,
By real presence in the sacrament,
After long fencing push'd against a wall,
Your salvo comes, that he 's not there at all:
There changed your faith, and what may change may fall.
Who can believe what varies every day,
Nor ever was, nor will be at a stay?'
'Tortures may force the tongue untruths to tell,
And I ne'er own'd myself infallible,
(Replied the Panther:) grant such presence were,
Yet in your sense I never own'd it there.
A real virtue we by faith receive,
And that we in the sacrament believe.'
'Then, (said the Hind,) as you the matter state,
Not only Jesuits can equivocate;
For real, as you now the word expound,
From solid substance dwindles to a sound.
Methinks an Æsop's fable you repeat;
You know who took the shadow for the meat:
Your Church's substance thus you change at will,
And yet retain your former figure still.
I freely grant you spoke to save your life;
For then you lay beneath the butcher's knife.
Long time you fought, redoubled battery bore,
But, after all, against yourself you swore;
Your former self: for every hour your form
Is chopp'd and changed, like winds before a storm.
Thus fear and interest will prevail with some,
For all have not the gift of martyrdom.'
The Panther grinn'd at this, and thus replied:
That men may err was never yet denied.
But, if that common principle be true,
The canon, dame, is levell'd full at you.
But, shunning long disputes, I fain would see
That wondrous wight Infallibility.
Is he from heaven, this mighty champion, come?
Or lodged below in subterranean Rome?
First, seat him somewhere, and derive his race,
Or else conclude that nothing has no place.'
'Suppose, though I disown it, (said the Hind,)
The certain mansion were not yet assign'd;

The doubtful residence no proof can bring
Against the plain existence of the thing.
Because philosophers may disagree,
If sight by emission or reception be,
Shall it be thence inferr'd I do not see?
But you require an answer positive,
Which yet, when I demand, you dare not give;
For fallacies in universals live.
I then affirm that this unfailing guide
In Pope and General Councils must reside;
Both lawful, both combined: what one decrees
By numerous votes, the other ratifies:
On this undoubted sense the Church relies.
'Tis true, some doctors in a scantier space,
I mean, in each apart, contract the place.
Some who, to greater length, extend the line,
The Church's after-acceptation join.
This last circumference appears too wide;
The Church diffused is by the Council tied;
As members by their representatives
Obliged to laws, which Prince and Senate gives.
Thus some contract, and some enlarge the space:
In Pope and Council, who denies the place,
Assisted from above with God's unfailing grace?
Those canons all the needful points contain;
Their sense so obvious, and their words so plain,
That no disputes about the doubtful text
Have hitherto the labouring world perplex'd.
If any should in after-times appear,
New Councils must be call'd, to make the meaning clear:
Because in them the power supreme resides;
And all the promises are to the guides.
This may be taught with sound and safe defence:
But mark how sandy is your own pretence,
Who, setting Councils, Pope and Church aside,
Are every man his own presuming guide.
The sacred books, you say, are full and plain,
And every needful point of truth contain:
All, who can read, interpreters may be:
Thus, though your several Churches disagree,
Yet every saint has to himself alone
The secret of this philosophic stone.
These principles your jarring sects unite,
When differing doctors and disciples fight.

Though Luther, Zuinglius, Calvin, holy chiefs,
Have made a battle-royal of beliefs;
Or, like wild horses, several ways have whirl'd
The tortured text about the Christian world;
Each Jehu lashing on with furious force,
That Turk or Jew could not have used it worse;
No matter what dissension leaders make,
Where every private man may save a stake:
Ruled by the Scripture and his own advice,
Each has a blind bye-path to Paradise;
Where, driving in a circle, slow or fast,
Opposing sects are sure to meet at last.
A wondrous charity you have in store
For all reform'd to pass the narrow door:
So much, that Mahomet had scarcely more.
For he, kind prophet, was for damning none;
But Christ and Moses were to save their own:
Himself was to secure his chosen race,
Though reason good for Turks to take the place,
And he allow'd to be the better man,
In virtue of his holier Al-coran.'

'True, (said the Panther,) I shall ne'er deny,
My brethren may be saved as well as I:
Though Huguenots contemn our ordination,
Succession, ministerial vocation;
And Luther, more mistaking what he read,
Misjoins the sacred body with the bread:
Yet, lady, still remember I maintain,
The word in needful points is only plain.'

'Needless, or needful, I not now contend,
For still you have a loop-hole for a friend,
(Rejoin'd the matron): but the rule you lay
Has led whole flocks, and leads them still astray,
In weighty points, and full damnation's way.
For did not Arius first, Socinus now,
The Son's eternal Godhead disavow?
And did not these by gospel texts alone
Condemn our doctrine, and maintain their own?
Have not all heretics the same pretence
To plead the Scriptures in their own defence?
How did the Nicene Council then decide
That strong debate? was it by Scripture tried?
No, sure; to that the rebel would not yield;
Squadrons of texts he marshall'd in the field:

That was but civil war, an equal set,
Where piles with piles, and eagles eagles met.
With texts point-blank and plain he faced the foe,
And did not Satan tempt our Saviour so?
The good old bishops took a simpler way;
Each ask'd but what he heard his father say,
Or how he was instructed in his youth,
And by tradition's force upheld the truth.'
The Panther smiled at this; 'And when, (said she,)
Were those first Councils disallow'd by me?
Or where did I at sure tradition strike,
Provided still it were apostolic?'
'Friend, (said the Hind,) you quit your former ground,
Where all your faith you did on Scripture found:
Now 'tis tradition join'd with holy writ;
But thus your memory betrays your wit.'
'No, (said the Panther,) for in that I view,
When your tradition's forged, and when 'tis true.
I set them by the rule, and, as they square,
Or deviate from undoubted doctrine there,
This oral fiction, that old faith declare.'
HIND. 'The Council steer'd, it seems, a different course:
They tried the Scripture by tradition's force:
But you tradition by the Scripture try;
Pursued by sects, from this to that you fly,
Nor dare on one foundation to rely.
The word is then deposed, and in this view,
You rule the Scripture, not the Scripture you.'
'Thus (said the dame, and, smiling, thus pursued)
I see, tradition then is disallow'd,
When not evinced by Scripture to be true,
And Scripture, as interpreted by you.
But here you tread upon unfaithful ground;
Unless you could infallibly expound:
Which you reject as odious Popery,
And throw that doctrine back with scorn on me.
Suppose we on things traditive divide,
And both appeal to Scripture to decide;
By various texts we both uphold our claim,
Nay, often, ground our titles on the same:
After long labour lost, and time's expense,
Both grant the words, and quarrel for the sense.
Thus all disputes for ever must depend;
For no dumb rule can controversies end.

Thus, when you said, Tradition must be tried
By sacred writ, whose sense yourselves decide,
You said no more, but that yourselves must be
The judges of the Scripture sense, not we.
Against our Church-tradition you declare,
And yet your clerks would sit in Moses' chair:
At least 'tis proved against your argument,
The rule is far from plain, where all dissent.'

'If not by Scriptures, how can we be sure,
(Replied the Panther,) what tradition 's pure?
For you may palm upon us new for old:
All, as they say, that glitters, is not gold.'

'How but by following her, (replied the dame,)
To whom derived from sire to son they came;
Where every age does on another move,
And trusts no farther than the next above;
Where all the rounds like Jacob's ladder rise,
The lowest hid in earth, the topmost in the skies.'

Sternly the savage did her answer mark,
Her glowing eyeballs glittering in the dark,
And said but this: 'Since lucre was your trade,
Succeeding times such dreadful gaps have made,
'Tis dangerous climbing: to your sons and you
I leave the ladder, and its omen too.'

HIND. 'The Panther's breath was ever famed for sweet;
But from the Wolf such wishes oft I meet:
You learn'd this language from the blatant beast,
Or rather did not speak, but were possess'd.
As for your answer, 'tis but barely urged:
You must evince tradition to be forged;
Produce plain proofs, unblemish'd authors use,
As ancient as those ages they accuse;
'Till when, 'tis not sufficient to defame;
An old possession stands till elder quits the claim.
Then for our interest, which is named alone
To load with envy, we retort your own.
For when traditions in your faces fly,
Resolving not to yield, you must decry.
As, when the cause goes hard, the guilty man
Excepts, and thins his jury all he can;
So, when you stand of other aid bereft,
You to the Twelve Apostles would be left.
Your friend the Wolf did with more craft provide
To set those toys, traditions, quite aside;

And Fathers too, unless when, reason spent,
He cites them but sometimes for ornament.
But, madam Panther, you, though more sincere,
Are not so wise as your adulterer:
The private spirit is a better blind,
Than all the dodging tricks your authors find.
For they, who left the Scripture to the crowd,
Each for his own peculiar judge allow'd;
The way to please them was to make them proud.
Thus, with full sails, they ran upon the shelf;
Who could suspect a cozenage from himself?
On his own reason safer 'tis to stand,
Than be deceived and damn'd at second hand.
But you, who Fathers and traditions take,
And garble some, and some you quite forsake,
Pretending Church-authority to fix,
And yet some grains of private spirit mix,
Are, like a mule, made up of differing seed,
And that 's the reason why you never breed;
At least not propagate your kind abroad,
For home-dissenters are by statutes awed.
And yet they grow upon you every day,
While you, to speak the best, are at a stay,
For sects, that are extremes, abhor a middle way.
Like tricks of state, to stop a raging flood,
Or mollify a mad-brain'd senate's mood:
Of all expedients never one was good.
Well may they argue, (nor can you deny)
If we must fix on Church-authority,
Best on the best, the fountain, not the flood;
That must be better still, if this be good.
Shall she command, who has herself rebell'd?
Is Antichrist by Antichrist expell'd?
Did we a lawful tyranny displace,
To set aloft a bastard of the race?
Why all these wars to win the Book, if we
Must not interpret for ourselves, but she?
Either be wholly slaves, or wholly free.
For purging fires traditions must not fight;
But they must prove episcopacy's right.
Thus those led horses are from service freed;
You never mount them but in time of need.
Like mercenaries, hired for home defence,
They will not serve against their native prince.

Against domestic foes of hierarchy
These are drawn forth, to make fanatics fly;
But, when they see their countrymen at hand,
Marching against them under Church-command,
Straight they forsake their colours, and disband.
Thus she, nor could the Panther well enlarge
With weak defence against so strong a charge;
But said: 'For what did Christ his word provide,
If still his Church must want a living guide?
And if all saving doctrines are not there,
Or sacred penmen could not make them clear,
From after-ages we should hope in vain
For truths which men inspired could not explain.'
'Before the word was written,' (said the Hind,)
Our Saviour preach'd his faith to human kind:
From his apostles the first age received
Eternal truth, and what they taught believed.
Thus by tradition faith was planted first;
Succeeding flocks succeeding pastors nursed.
This was the way our wise Redeemer chose,
(Who sure could all things for the best dispose)
To fence his fold from their encroaching foes.
He could have writ himself, but well foresaw
The event would be like that of Moses' law;
Some difference would arise, some doubts remain,
Like those which yet the jarring Jews maintain.
No written laws can be so plain, so pure,
But wit may gloss, and malice may obscure;
Not those indited by his first command,
A prophet graved the text, an angel held his hand.
Thus faith was ere the written word appear'd,
And men believed, not what they read, but heard.
But since the apostles could not be confined
To these, or those, but severally design'd
Their large commission round the world to blow,
To spread their faith, they spread their labours too.
Yet still their absent flock their pains did share;
They hearken'd still, for love produces care.
And, as mistakes arose, or discords fell,
Or bold seducers taught them to rebel,
As charity grew cold, or faction hot,
Or long neglect their lessons had forgot,
For all their wants they wisely did provide,
And preaching by epistles was supplied:

So great physicians cannot all attend,
But some they visit, and to some they send.
Yet all those letters were not writ to all;
Nor first intended but occasional,
Their absent sermons; nor if they contain
All needful doctrines, are those doctrines plain.
Clearness by frequent preaching must be wrought;
They writ but seldom, but they daily taught.
And what one saint has said of holy Paul,
"He darkly writ," is true applied to all.
For this obscurity could Heaven provide
More prudently than by a living guide,
As doubts arose, the difference to decide?
A guide was therefore needful, therefore made;
And, if appointed, sure to be obey'd.
Thus, with due reverence to the apostles' writ,
By which my sons are taught, to which submit;
I think, those truths, their sacred works contain,
The Church alone can certainly explain;
That following ages, leaning on the past,
May rest upon the primitive at last.
Nor would I thence the word no rule infer,
But none without the Church-interpreter.
Because, as I have urged before, 'tis mute,
And is itself the subject of dispute.
But what the apostles their successors taught,
They to the next, from them to us is brought,
The undoubted sense which is in Scripture sought.
From hence the Church is arm'd, when errors rise,
To stop their entrance, and prevent surprise;
And, safe entrench'd within, her foes without defies.
By these all festering sores her councils heal,
Which time or has disclosed, or shall reveal;
For discord cannot end without a last appeal.
Nor can a council national decide,
But with subordination to her guide:
(I wish the cause were on that issue tried.)
Much less the Scripture; for suppose debate
Betwixt pretenders to a fair estate,
Bequeath'd by some legator's last intent;
(Such is our dying Saviour's testament:)
The will is proved, is open'd, and is read;
The doubtful heirs their differing titles plead:

All vouch the words their interest to maintain,
And each pretends by those his cause is plain.
Shall then the Testament award the right?
No, that 's the Hungary for which they fight;
The field of battle, subject of debate;
The thing contended for, the fair estate.
The sense is intricate, 'tis only clear
What vowels and what consonants are there.
Therefore 'tis plain, its meaning must be tried
Before some judge appointed to decide.'
'Suppose, (the fair apostate said,) I grant,
The faithful flock some living guide should want,
Your arguments an endless chace pursue:
Produce this vaunted leader to our view,
This mighty Moses of the chosen crew.'
The dame, who saw her fainting foe retired,
With force renew'd, to victory aspired;
And, looking upward to her kindred sky,
As once our Saviour own'd his Deity,
Pronounced his words—"She whom ye seek am I."
Nor less amazed this voice the Panther heard,
Than were those Jews to hear a God declared.
Then thus the matron modestly renew'd:
'Let all your prophets and their sects be view'd,
And see to which of them yourselves think fit
The conduct of your conscience to submit:
Each proselyte would vote his doctor best,
With absolute exclusion to the rest:
Thus would your Polish diet disagree,
And end, as it began, in anarchy:
Yourself the fairest for election stand,
Because you seem crown-general of the land:
But soon against your superstitious lawn
Some Presbyterian sabre would be drawn:
In your establish'd laws of sovereignty
The rest some fundamental flaw would see,
And call rebellion gospel-liberty.
To Church-decrees your articles require
Submission mollified, if not entire.
Homage denied, to censures you proceed:
But when Curtana will not do the deed,
You lay that pointless clergy-weapon by,
And to the laws, your sword of justice, fly.

Now this your sects the more unkindly take,
(Those prying varlets hit the blots you make)
Because some ancient friends of yours declare,
Your only rule of faith the Scriptures are,
Interpreted by men of judgment sound,
Which every sect will for themselves expound;
Nor think less reverence to their doctors due
For sound interpretation, than to you.
If then, by able heads, are understood
Your brother prophets, who reform'd abroad;
Those able heads expound a wiser way,
That their own sheep their shepherd should obey.
But if you mean yourselves are only sound,
That doctrine turns the Reformation round,
And all the rest are false reformers found;
Because in sundry points you stand alone,
Not in communion join'd with any one;
And therefore must be all the Church, or none.
Then, 'till you have agreed whose judge is best,
Against this forced submission they protest:
While sound and sound a different sense explains,
Both play at hardhead till they break their brains;
And from their chairs each other's force defy,
While unregarded thunders vainly fly.
I pass the rest, because your Church alone
Of all usurpers best could fill the throne.
But neither you, nor any sect beside,
For this high office can be qualified,
With necessary gifts required in such a guide.
For that, which must direct the whole, must be
Bound in one bond of faith and unity:
But all your several Churches disagree.
The consubstantiating Church and priest
Refuse communion to the Calvinist:
The French reform'd, from preaching you restrain,
Because you judge their ordination vain;
And so they judge of yours, but donors must ordain.
In short, in doctrine, or in discipline,
Not one reform'd can with another join:
But all from each, as from damnation, fly;
No union they pretend, but in Non-Popery.
Nor, should their members in a synod meet,
Could any Church presume to mount the seat,

Above the rest, their discords to decide ;
None would obey, but each would be the guide :
And, face to face, dissensions would increase ;
For only distance now preserves the peace.
All in their turns accusers, and accused,
Babel was never half so much confused :
What one can plead, the rest can plead as well ;
For amongst equals lies no last appeal,
And all confess themselves are fallible.
Now since you grant some necessary guide,
All who can err are justly laid aside :
Because a trust so sacred to confer
Shows want of such a sure interpreter ;
And how can he be needful who can err ?
Then, granting that unerring guide we want,
That such there is you stand obliged to grant :
Our Saviour else were wanting to supply
Our needs, and obviate that necessity.
It then remains, that Church can only be
The guide, which owns unfailing certainty ;
Or else you slip your hold, and change your side,
Relapsing from a necessary guide.
But this annex'd condition of the crown,
Immunity from errors, you disown ;
Here then you shrink, and lay your weak pretences down.
For petty royalties you raise debate ;
But this unfailing universal state
You shun ; nor dare succeed to such a glorious weight ;
And for that cause those promises detest,
With which our Saviour did his Church invest ;
But strive to evade, and fear to find them true,
As conscious they were never meant to you :
All which the Mother-Church asserts her own,
And with unrivall'd claim ascends the throne.
So when of old the Almighty Father sate
In council, to redeem our ruin'd state,
Millions of millions, at a distance round,
Silent, the sacred consistory crown'd,
To hear what mercy, mix'd with justice, could propound :
All prompt, with eager pity, to fulfil
The full extent of their Creator's will.
But when the stern conditions were declared,
A mournful whisper through the host was heard,

And the whole hierarchy, with heads hung down,
Submissively declined the ponderous proffer'd crown.
Then, not till then, the Eternal Son from high
Rose in the strength of all the Deity;
Stood forth to accept the terms, and underwent
A weight which all the frame of heaven had bent,
Nor he himself could bear, but as Omnipotent.
Now, to remove the least remaining doubt,
That e'en the blear-eyed sects may find her out,
Behold what heavenly rays adorn her brows,
What from his wardrobe her beloved allows
To deck the wedding-day of his unspotted spouse.
Behold what marks of majesty she brings;
Richer than ancient heirs of eastern kings:
Her right hand holds the sceptre and the keys,
To show whom she commands, and who obeys:
With these to bind, or set the sinner free,
With that to assert spiritual royalty.
One in herself, not rent by schism, but sound,
Entire, one solid shining diamond;
Not sparkles shatter'd into sects like you:
One is the Church, and must be to be true:
One central principle of unity.
As undivided, so from errors free,
As one in faith, so one in sanctity.
Thus she, and none but she, the insulting rage
Of heretics opposed from age to age:
Still when the giant-brood invades her throne,
She stoops from heaven, and meets them half-way down,
And with paternal thunder vindicates her crown.
But like Egyptian sorcerers you stand,
And vainly lift aloft your magic wand,
To sweep away the swarms of vermin from the land:
You could, like them, with like infernal force,
Produce the plague, but not arrest the course.
But when the boils and blotches, with disgrace
And public scandal, sat upon the face,
Themselves attack'd, the Magi strove no more,
They saw God's finger, and their fate deplore;
Themselves they could not cure of the dishonest sore.
Thus one, thus pure, behold her largely spread,
Like the fair ocean from her mother-bed;
From east to west triumphantly she rides,
All shores are water'd by her wealthy tides.

The Gospel-sound, diffused from pole to pole,
Where winds can carry, and where waves can roll,
The self-same doctrine of the sacred page
Convey'd to every clime, in every age.
Here let my sorrow give my satire place,
To raise new blushes on my British race;
Our sailing ships like common sewers we use,
And through our distant colonies diffuse
The draught of dungeons, and the stench of stews.
Whom, when their home-bred honesty is lost,
We disembogue on some far Indian coast:
Thieves, panders, paillards, sins of every sort,
Those are the manufactures we export;
And these the missioners our zeal has made:
For, with my country's pardon be it said,
Religion is the least of all our trade.
Yet some improve their traffic more than we;
For they on gain—their only god, rely,
And set a public price on piety.
Industrious of the needle and the chart,
They run full sail to their Japonian mart;
Prevention fear, and, prodigal of fame,
Sell all of Christian to the very name;
Nor leave enough of that to hide their naked shame.
Thus, of three marks, which in the Creed we view,
Not one of all can be applied to you:
Much less the fourth; in vain, alas! you seek
The ambitious title of Apostolic:
God-like descent! 'tis well your blood can be
Proved noble in the third or fourth degree:
For all of ancient that you had before,
(I mean what is not borrow'd from our store)
Was error fulminated o'er and o'er;
Old heresies condemn'd in ages past,
By care and time recover'd from the blast.
'Tis said with ease, but never can be proved,
The Church her old foundations has removed,
And built new doctrines on unstable sands:
Judge that, ye winds and rains: you proved her, yet she stands.
Those ancient doctrines charged on her for new,
Show when, and how, and from what hands they grew.
We claim no power, when heresies grow bold,
To coin new faith, but still declare the old.

How else could that obscene disease be purged,
When controverted texts are vainly urged?
To prove tradition new, there 's somewhat more
Required, than saying, 'Twas not used before.
Those monumental arms are never stirr'd,
Till schism or heresy call down Goliah's sword.
Thus, what you call corruptions, are, in truth,
The first plantations of the Gospel's youth;
Old standard faith: but cast your eyes again,
And view those errors which new sects maintain,
Or which of old disturb'd the Church's peaceful reign;
And we can point each period of the time,
When they began, and who begot the crime;
Can calculate how long the eclipse endured,
Who interposed, what digits were obscured:
Of all which are already pass'd away,
We know the rise, the progress, and decay.
Despair at our foundations then to strike,
Till you can prove your faith apostolic;
A limpid stream drawn from the native source;
Succession lawful in a lineal course.
Prove any Church, opposed to this our head,
So one, so pure, so unconfinedly spread,
Under one chief of the spiritual state,
The members all combined, and all subordinate:
Show such a seamless coat, from schism so free,
In no communion join'd with heresy.
If such a one you find, let truth prevail:
Till when your weights will in the balance fail:
A Church unprincipled kicks up the scale.
But if you cannot think (nor sure you can
Suppose in God what were unjust in man)
That He, the fountain of eternal grace,
Should suffer falsehood, for so long a space,
To banish truth, and to usurp her place:
That seven successive ages should be lost,
And preach damnation at their proper cost;
That all your erring ancestors should die,
Drown'd in the abyss of deep idolatry:
If piety forbid such thoughts to rise,
Awake, and open your unwilling eyes:
God hath left nothing for each age undone,
From this to that wherein he sent his Son:
Then think but well of him, and half your work is done.

See how his Church, adorn'd with every grace,
With open arms, a kind forgiving face,
Stands ready to prevent her long-lost son's embrace.
Not more did Joseph o'er his brethren weep,
Nor less himself could from discovery keep,
When in the crowd of suppliants they were seen,
And in their crew his best-loved Benjamin.
That pious Joseph in the Church behold,
To feed your famine, and refuse your gold;
The Joseph you exiled, the Joseph whom you sold.'
Thus, while with heavenly charity she spoke,
A streaming blaze the silent shadows broke,
Shot from the skies a cheerful azure light;
The birds obscene to forest wing'd their flight,
And gaping graves received the wand'ring guilty spright.
Such were the pleasing triumphs of the sky,
For James's late nocturnal victory;
The pledge of his almighty Patron's love,
The fireworks which his angels made above.
I saw myself the lambent easy light
Gild the brown horror, and dispel the night:
The messenger with speed the tidings bore;
News which three labouring nations did restore;
But Heaven's own Nuncius was arrived before.
By this, the Hind had reach'd her lonely cell,
And vapours rose, and dews unwholesome fell.
When she, by frequent observation wise,
As one who long on heaven had fix'd her eyes,
Discern'd a change of weather in the skies.
The western borders were with crimson spread,
The moon descending look'd all flaming red;
She thought good manners bound her to invite
The stranger dame to be her guest that night.
'Tis true, coarse diet, and a short repast,
(She said,) were weak inducements to the taste
Of one so nicely bred, and so unused to fast:
But what plain fare her cottage could afford,
A hearty welcome at a homely board,
Was freely hers; and, to supply the rest,
An honest meaning, and an open breast:
Last, with content of mind, the poor man's wealth,
A grace-cup to their common patron's health.
This she desired her to accept, and stay,
For fear she might be wilder'd in her way,

Because she wanted an unerring guide,
And then the dew-drops on her silken hide
Her tender constitution did declare,
Too lady-like a long fatigue to bear,
And rough inclemencies of raw nocturnal air.
But most she fear'd that, travelling so late,
Some evil-minded beasts might lie in wait,
And without witness wreak their hidden hate.'
The Panther, though she lent a listening ear,
Had more of lion in her than to fear:
Yet wisely weighing, since she had to deal
With many foes, their numbers might prevail,
Return'd her all the thanks she could afford;
And took her friendly hostess at her word:
Who, entering first her lowly roof, a shed
With hoary moss, and winding ivy spread,
Honest enough to hide an humble hermit's head;
Thus graciously bespoke her welcome guest:
'So might these walls, with your fair presence blest,
Become your dwelling-place of everlasting rest;
Not for a night, or quick revolving year,
Welcome an owner, not a sojourner.
This peaceful seat my poverty secures;
War seldom enters but where wealth allures:
Nor yet despise it; for this poor abode
Has oft received, and yet receives a God;
A God, victorious of the Stygian race,
Here laid his sacred limbs, and sanctified the place.
This mean retreat did mighty Pan contain;
Be emulous of him, and pomp disdain,
And dare not to debase your soul to gain.'
The silent stranger stood amazed to see
Contempt of wealth, and wilful poverty;
And, though ill habits are not soon controll'd,
Awhile suspended her desire of gold;
But civilly drew in her sharpen'd paws,
Not violating hospitable laws,
And pacified her tail, and lick'd her frothy jaws.
The Hind did first her country cates provide;
Then couch'd herself securely by her side.

THE THIRD PART.

MUCH malice, mingled with a little wit,
Perhaps, may censure this mysterious writ:
Because the muse has peopled Caledon
With Panthers, Bears, and Wolves, and beasts unknown,
As if we were not stock'd with monsters of our own.
Let Æsop answer, who has set to view
Such kinds as Greece and Phrygia never knew;
And mother Hubbard, in her homely dress,
Has sharply blamed a British Lioness;
That queen, whose feast the factious rabble keep,
Exposed obscenely naked and asleep.
Led by those great examples, may not I
The wanted organs of their words supply?
If men transact like brutes,.'tis equal then
For brutes to claim the privilege of men.
Others our Hind of folly will indict,
To entertain a dangerous guest by night.
Let those remember, that she cannot die
'Till rolling time is lost in round eternity;
Nor need she fear the Panther, though untamed,
Because the Lion's peace was now proclaim'd:
The wary savage would not give offence,
To forfeit the protection of her Prince;
But watch'd the time her vengeance to complete,
When all her furry sons in frequent senate met;
Meanwhile, she quench'd her fury at the flood,
And with a lenten sallad cool'd her blood.
Their commons, though but coarse, were nothing scant,
Nor did their minds an equal banquet want.
For now the Hind, whose noble nature strove
To express her plain simplicity of love,
Did all the honours of her house so well,
No sharp debates disturb'd the friendly meal.
She turn'd the talk, avoiding that extreme,
To common dangers past, a sadly-pleasing theme;
Rememb'ring every storm which toss'd the state,
When both were objects of the public hate,
And dropp'd a tear betwixt for her own children's fate.
Nor fail'd she then a full review to make
Of what the Panther suffered for her sake:
Her lost esteem, her truth, her loyal care,
Her faith unshaken to an exiled heir,

Her strength to endure, her courage to defy;
Her choice of honourable infamy.
On these, prolixly thankful, she enlarged;
Then with acknowledgment herself she charged;
For friendship, of itself an holy tie,
Is made more sacred by adversity.
Now should they part, malicious tongues would say,
They met like chance companions on the way,
Whom mutual fear of robbers had possess'd;
While danger lasted, kindness was profess'd;
But that once o'er, the short-lived union ends:
The road divides, and there divide the friends.
The Panther nodded when her speech was done,
And thank'd her coldly in a hollow tone:
But said her gratitude had gone too far
For common offices of Christian care.
If to the lawful heir she had been true,
She paid but Cæsar what was Cæsar's due.
'I might, (she added,) with like praise describe
Your suffering sons, and so return your bribe:
But incense from my hands is poorly prized;
For gifts are scorn'd where givers are despised.
I served a turn, and then was cast away;
You, like the gaudy fly, your wings display,
And sip the sweets, and bask in your great patron's day.'
This heard, the matron was not slow to find
What sort of malady had seized her mind:
Disdain, with gnawing Envy, fell Despite,
And canker'd Malice stood in open sight:
Ambition, Interest, Pride without control,
And Jealousy, the jaundice of the soul;
Revenge, the bloody minister of ill,
With all the lean tormenters of the will.
'Twas easy now to guess from whence arose
Her new-made union with her ancient foes,
Her forced civilities, her faint embrace,
Affected kindness with an alter'd face:
Yet durst she not too deeply probe the wound,
As hoping still the nobler parts were sound:
But strove with anodynes to assuage the smart,
And mildly thus her medicine did impart.
'Complaints of lovers help to ease their pain;
It shows a rest of kindness to complain;

A friendship loth to quit its former hold;
And conscious merit may be justly bold:
But much more just your jealousy would show,
If other's good were injury to you:
Witness, ye heavens, how I rejoice to see
Rewarded worth and rising loyalty.
Your warrior offspring that upheld the crown,
The scarlet honour of your peaceful gown,
Are the most pleasing objects I can find,
Charms to my sight, and cordials to my mind:
When virtue spooms before a prosperous gale,
My heaving wishes help to fill the sail;
And if my prayers for all the brave were heard,
Cæsar should still have such, and such should still reward.
The labour'd earth your pains have sow'd and till'd;
'Tis just you reap the product of the field:
Your's be the harvest, 'tis the beggar's gain
To glean the fallings of the loaded wain.
Such scatter'd ears as are not worth your care,
Your charity, for alms, may safely spare,
For alms are but the vehicles of prayer.
My daily bread is literally implored;
I have no barns nor granaries to hoard.
If Cæsar to his own his hand extends,
Say, which of yours his charity offends:
You know he largely gives to more than are his friends.
Are you defrauded, when he feeds the poor?
Our mite decreases nothing of your store.
I am but few, and by your fare you see
My crying sins are not of luxury.
Some juster motive sure your mind withdraws,
And makes you break our friendship's holy laws;
For barefaced envy is too base a cause.
Show more occasion for your discontent;
Your love, the Wolf, would help you to invent:
Some German quarrel, or, as times go now,
Some French, where force is uppermost, will do.
When at the fountain's head, as merit ought
To claim the place, you take a swilling draught,
How easy 'tis an envious eye to throw,
And tax the sheep for troubling streams below;
Or call her (when no farther cause you find)
An enemy profess'd of all your kind.

But then, perhaps, the wicked world would think,
The Wolf design'd to eat as well as drink.'
This last allusion gall'd the Panther more,
Because indeed it rubb'd upon the sore.
Yet seem'd she not to winch, though shrewdly pain'd;
But thus her passive character maintain'd.
'I never grudged, whate'er my foes report,
Your flaunting fortune in the Lion's court.
You have your day, or you are much belied,
But I am always on the suffering side:
You know my doctrine, and I need not say
I will not, but I cannot disobey.
On this firm principle I ever stood;
He of my sons who fails to make it good,
By one rebellious act renounces too my blood.'
'Ah, (said the Hind,) how many sons have you
Who call you Mother, whom you never knew!
But most of them who that relation plead,
Are such ungracious youths as wish you dead.
They gape at rich revenues which you hold,
And fain would nibble at your grandame Gold;
Inquire into your years, and laugh to find
Your crazy temper shows you much declined.
Were you not dim and doted, you might see
A pack of cheats that claim a pedigree,
No more of kin to you, than you to me.
Do you not know, that, for a little coin,
Heralds can foist a name into the line?
They ask you blessing but for what you have,
But once possess'd of what with care you save,
The wanton boys would dance upon your grave.
Your sons of latitude, that court your grace,
Though most resembling you in form and face,
Are far the worst of our pretended race.
And, but I blush your honesty to blot,
Pray God you prove them lawfully begot:
For in some Popish libels I have read,
The Wolf has been too busy in your bed;
At least their hinder parts, the belly-piece,
The paunch, and all that Scorpio claims, are his.
Their malice, too, a sore suspicion brings;
For though they dare not bark, they snarl at kings:
Nor blame them for intruding in your line;
Fat bishoprics are still of right divine.

Think you your new French proselytes are come
To starve abroad, because they starved at home?
Your benefices twinkled from afar;
They found the new Messiah by the star:
Those Swiss will fight on any side for pay,
And 'tis the living that conforms, not they.
Mark with what management their tribes divide,
Some stick to you, and some to t'other side,
That many churches may for many mouths provide.
More vacant pulpits would more converts make;
All would have latitude enough to take:
The rest unbeneficed your sects maintain;
For ordinations without cures are vain,
And chamber practice is a silent gain.
Your sons of breadth at home are much like these;
Their soft and yielding metals run with ease:
They melt, and take the figure of the mould;
But harden and preserve it best in gold.'
'Your Delphic sword, (the Panther then replied,)
Is double-edged, and cuts on either side.
Some sons of mine, who bear upon their shield
Three steeples argent in a sable field,
Have sharply tax'd your converts, who, unfed,
Have follow'd you for miracles of bread;
Such who themselves of no religion are,
Allured with gain, for any will declare.
Bare lies with bold assertions they can face;
But dint of argument is out of place.
The grim logician puts them in a fright;
'Tis easier far to flourish than to fight.
Thus our eighth Henry's marriage they defame;
They say the schism of beds began the game,
Divorcing from the Church, to wed the dame:
Though largely proved, and by himself profess'd,
That conscience, conscience would not let him rest;
I mean, not till possess'd of her he loved,
And old, uncharming Katherine was removed.
For sundry years before he did complain,
And told his ghostly confessor his pain.
With the same impudence, without a ground,
They say, that look the Reformation round,
No Treatise of Humility is found:
But if none were, the gospel does not want;

Our Saviour preach'd it, and I hope you grant,
The Sermon on the Mount was Protestant.'
'No doubt, (replied the Hind,) as sure as all
The writings of Saint Peter and Saint Paul:
On that decision let it stand or fall.
Now, for my converts, who, you say, unfed,
Have follow'd me for miracles of bread;
Jude not by hearsay, but observe at least,
If since their change their loaves have been increased.
The Lion buys no converts; if he did,
Beasts would be sold as fast as he could bid.
Tax those of interest who conform for gain,
Or stay the market of another reign:
Your broad-way sons would never be too nice
To close with Calvin, if he paid their price;
But, raised three steeples higher, would change their note,
And quit the cassock for the canting-coat.
Now, if you damn this censure, as too bold,
Judge by yourselves, and think not others sold.
Meantime, my sons accused, by fame's report,
Pay small attendance at the Lion's court,
Nor rise with early crowds, nor flatter late;
(For silently they beg, who daily wait.)
Preferment is bestow'd, that comes unsought;
Attendance is a bribe, and then 'tis bought.
How they should speed, their fortune is untried;
For not to ask, is not to be denied.
For what they have, their God and King they bless,
And hope they should not murmur, had they less:
But, if reduced subsistence to implore,
In common prudence they would pass your door.
Unpitied Hudibras, your champion friend,
Has shown how far your charities extend.
This lasting verse shall on his tomb be read,
"He shamed you living, and upbraids you dead."
With odious atheist names you load your foes;
Your liberal Clergy why did I expose?
It never fails in charities like those.
In climes where true Religion is profess'd,
That imputation were no laughing jest:
But *Imprimatur*, with a chaplain's name,
Is here sufficient licence to defame.

What wonder is't that black detraction thrives?
The homicide of names is less than lives;
And yet the perjured murderer survives.'
This said, she paused a little, and suppress'd
The boiling indignation of her breast.
She knew the virtue of her blade, nor would
Pollute her satire with ignoble blood:
Her panting foe she saw before her eye,
And back she drew the shining weapon dry.
So when the generous Lion has in sight
His equal match, he rouses for the fight;
But when his foe lies prostrate on the plain,
He sheathes his paws, uncurls his angry mane,
And, pleased with bloodless honours of the day,
Walks over and disdains the inglorious prey.
So James, if great with less we may compare,
Arrests his rolling thunder-bolts in air;
And grants ungrateful friends a lengthen'd space,
To implore the remnants of long-suffering grace.
This breathing-time the matron took; and then
Resumed the thread of her discourse again.
'Be vengeance wholly left to powers divine,
And let Heaven judge betwixt your sons and mine:
If joys hereafter must be purchased here
With loss of all that mortals hold so dear,
Then welcome infamy and public shame,
And, last, a long farewell to worldly fame.
'Tis said with ease, but, oh, how hardly tried
By haughty souls to human honour tied!
Oh, sharp convulsive pangs of agonizing pride!
Down then, thou rebel, never more to rise,
And what thou didst, and dost, so dearly prize,
That fame, that darling fame, make that thy sacrifice.
'Tis nothing thou hast given; then add thy tears
For a long race of unrepenting years:
'Tis nothing yet, yet all thou hast to give;
Then add those may-be years thou hast to live:
Yet nothing still; then poor and naked come,
Thy father will receive his unthrift home,
And thy bless'd Saviour's blood discharge the mighty sum.
Thus (she pursued) I discipline a son,
Whose uncheck'd fury to revenge would run;
He champs the bit, impatient of his loss,
And starts aside, and flounders at the cross.

Instruct him better, gracious God, to know,
As thine is vengeance, so forgiveness too:
That, suffering from ill tongues, he bears no more
Than what his Sovereign bears, and what his Saviour bore
It now remains for you to school your child,
And ask why God's anointed he reviled;
A King and Princess dead! did Shimei worse?
The curser's punishment should fright the curse:
Your son was warn'd, and wisely gave it o'er,
But he, who counsell'd him, has paid the score:
The heavy malice could no higher tend,
But woe to him on whom the weights descend.
So to permitted ills the demon flies;
His rage is aim'd at Him who rules the skies:
Constrain'd to quit his cause, no succour found,
The foe discharges every tire around,
In clouds of smoke abandoning the fight;
But his own thundering peals proclaim his flight.
In Henry's change his charge as ill succeeds;
To that long story little answer needs:
Confront but Henry's words with Henry's deeds.
Were space allow'd, with ease it might be proved,
What springs his blessed reformation moved.
The dire effects appear'd in open sight,
Which from the cause he calls a distant flight,
And yet no larger leap than from the sun to light.
Now last your sons a double pæan sound,
A Treatise of Humility is found.
'Tis found, but better it had ne'er been sought,
Than thus in Protestant procession brought.
The famed original through Spain is known,
Rodriguez' work, my celebrated son,
Which yours, by ill-translating, made his own;
Conceal'd its author, and usurp'd the name,
The basest and ignoblest theft of fame.
My altars kindled first that living coal;
Restore, or practise better what you stole:
That virtue could this humble verse inspire,
'Tis all the restitution I require.'
Glad was the Panther that the charge was closed,
And none of all her fav'rite sons exposed.
For laws of arms permit each injured man
To make himself a saver where he can.

Perhaps the plunder'd merchant cannot tell
The names of pirates in whose hands he fell;
But at the den of thieves he justly flies,
And every Algerine is lawful prize.
No private person in the foe's estate
Can plead exemption from the public fate.
Yet Christian laws allow not such redress;
Then let the greater supersede the less.
But let the abettors of the Panther's crime
Learn to make fairer wars another time.
Some characters may sure be found to write
Among her sons; for 'tis no common sight,
A spotted dam, and all her offspring white.
The savage, though she saw her plea controll'd,
Yet would not wholly seem to quit her hold,
But offer'd fairly to compound the strife,
And judge conversion by the convert's life.
'"Tis true, (she said,) I think it somewhat strange,
So few should follow profitable change:
For present joys are more to flesh and blood,
Than a dull prospect of a distant good.
'Twas well alluded by a son of mine,
(I hope, to quote him, is not to purloin)
Two magnets, heaven and earth, allure to bliss;
The larger loadstone that, the nearer this:
The weak attraction of the greater fails;
We nod a while, but neighbourhood prevails:
But when the greater proves the nearer too,
I wonder more your converts come so slow.
Methinks in those who firm with me remain,
It shows a nobler principle than gain.'
'Your inference would be strong (the Hind replied)
If yours were in effect the suffering side;
Your clergy sons their own in peace possess,
Nor are their prospects in reversion less.
My proselytes are struck with awful dread;
Your bloody comet-laws hang blazing o'er their head:
The respite they enjoy but only lent,
The best they have to hope, protracted punishment.
Be judge yourself, if interest may prevail,
Which motives, yours or mine, will turn the scale.
While pride and pomp allure, and plenteous ease,
That is, till man's predominant passions cease,
Admire no longer at my slow increase.

By education most have been misled;
So they believe, because they so were bred.
The priest continues what the nurse began,
And thus the child imposes on the man.
The rest I named before, nor need repeat:
But interest is the most prevailing cheat,
The sly seducer both of age and youth;
They study that, and think they study truth.
When interest fortifies an argument,
Weak reason serves to gain the will's assent;
For souls, already warp'd, receive an easy bent.
Add long prescription of establish'd laws,
And pique of honour to maintain a cause,
And shame of change, and fear of future ill,
And zeal, the blind conductor of the will;
And, chief, among the still-mistaking crowd,
The fame of teachers obstinate and proud,
And, more than all, the private judge allow'd;
Disdain of Fathers, which the dance began;
And last, uncertain whose the narrower span,
The clown unread, and half-read gentleman.'

To this the Panther, with a scornful smile:
'Yet still you travel with unwearied toil,
And range around the realm without control,
Among my sons for proselytes to prowl,
And here and there you snap some silly soul.
You hinted fears of future change in state;
Pray Heaven you did not prophesy your fate.
Perhaps, you think your time of triumph near,
But may mistake the season of the year;
The Swallow's fortune gives you cause to fear.'

'For charity, (replied the matron,) tell
What sad mischance those pretty birds befel.'

'Nay, no mischance, (the savage dame replied,)
But want of wit in their unerring guide,
And eager haste, and gaudy hopes, and giddy pride.
Yet, wishing timely warning may prevail,
Make you the moral, and I'll tell the tale.

The Swallow, privileged above the rest
Of all the birds, as man's familiar guest,
Pursues the sun in summer, brisk and bold,
But wisely shuns the persecuting cold:
Is well to chancels and to chimneys known,
Though 'tis not thought she feeds on smoke alone.

From hence she has been held of heavenly line,
Endued with particles of soul divine.
This merry chorister had long possess'd
Her summer seat, and feather'd well her nest:
Till frowning skies began to change their cheer,
And Time turn'd up the wrong side of the year;
The shedding trees began the ground to strow
With yellow leaves, and bitter blasts to blow.
Sad auguries of winter thence she drew,
Which, by instinct, or prophecy, she knew;
When prudence warn'd her to remove betimes,
And seek a better heaven, and warmer climes.
Her sons were summon'd on a steeple's height,
And, call'd in common-council, vote a flight;
The day was named, the next that should be fair;
All to the general rendezvous repair,
They try their fluttering wings, and trust themselves in air:
But whether upward to the moon they go,
Or dream the winter out in caves below,
Or hawk at flies elsewhere, concerns us not to know.
Southwards, you may be sure, they bent their flight,
And harbour'd in a hollow rock at night;
Next morn they rose, and set up every sail;
The wind was fair, but blew a mackerel gale;
The sickly young sat shivering on the shore,
Abhorr'd salt water, never seen before,
And pray'd their tender mothers to delay
The passage, and expect a fairer day.
With these the Martin readily concurr'd,
A church-begot, and church-believing bird;
Of little body, but of lofty mind,
Round-bellied, for a dignity design'd,
And much a dunce, as Martins are by kind:
Yet often quoted Canon-laws, and Code,
And Fathers which he never understood;
But little learning needs in noble blood:
For, sooth to say, the Swallow brought him in,
Her household-chaplain, and her next of kin:
In superstition silly to excess,
And casting schemes by planetary guess;
In fine, short-wing'd, unfit himself to fly,
His fear foretold foul weather in the sky.
Besides, a Raven from a wither'd oak,
Left of their lodging, was observed to croak.

That omen liked him not; so his advice
Was present safety, bought at any price;
(A seeming pious care, that cover'd cowardice.)
To strengthen this, he told a boding dream,
Of rising waters, and a troubled stream,
Sure signs of anguish, dangers, and distress,
With something more, not lawful to express;
By which he slily seem'd to intimate
Some secret revelation of their fate.
For he concluded, once upon a time,
He found a leaf inscribed with sacred rhyme,
Whose antique characters did well denote
The Sibyl's hand of the Cumæan grot:
The mad divineress had plainly writ,
A time should come (but many ages yet)
In which, sinister destinies ordain,
A dame should drown with all her feather'd train,
And seas from thence be call'd the Chelidonian main.
At this, some shook for fear, the more devout
Arose, and bless'd themselves from head to foot.
'Tis true, some stagers of the wiser sort
Made all these idle wonderments their sport:
They said, their only danger was delay,
And he, who heard what every fool could say,
Would never fix his thought, but trim his time away.
The passage yet was good; the wind,'tis true,
Was somewhat high, but that was nothing new,
No more than usual equinoxes blew.
The sun (already from the Scales declined)
Gave little hopes of better days behind,
But change from bad to worse of weather and of wind.
Nor need they fear the dampness of the sky
Should flag their wings, and hinder them to fly,
'Twas only water thrown on sails too dry.
But, least of all, philosophy presumes
Of truth in dreams, from melancholy fumes:
Perhaps the Martin, housed in holy ground,
Might think of ghosts that walk their midnight round,
'Till grosser atoms, tumbling in the stream
Of fancy, madly met, and clubb'd into a dream:
As little weight his vain presages bear,
Of ill effect to such alone who fear;
Most prophecies are of a piece with these,
Each Nostradamus can foretel with ease:

Not naming persons, and confounding times,
One casual truth supports a thousand lying rhymes.
The advice was true; but fear had seized the most,
And all good counsel is on cowards lost.
The question crudely put to shun delay,
'Twas carried by the major part to stay.
His point thus gain'd, Sir Martin dated thence
His power, and from a priest became a prince.
He order'd all things with a busy care,
And cells and refectories did prepare,
And large provisions laid of winter fare:
But now and then let fall a word or two
Of hope, that Heaven some miracle might show,
And for their sakes the sun should backward go;
Against the laws of nature upward climb,
And, mounted on the Ram, renew the prime:
For which two proofs in sacred story lay,
Of Ahaz' dial, and of Joshua's day.
In expectation of such times as these,
A chapel housed them, truly called of Ease:
For Martin much devotion did not ask;
They pray'd sometimes, and that was all their task.
It happen'd (as beyond the reach of wit
Blind prophecies may have a lucky hit)
That this accomplish'd, or at least in part,
Gave great repute to their new Merlin's art.
Some Swifts, the giants of the Swallow kind,
Large-limb'd, stout-hearted, but of stupid mind,
(For Swisses or for Gibeonites design'd)
These lubbers, peeping through a broken pane,
To suck fresh air, survey'd the neighbouring plain;
And saw (but scarcely could believe their eyes)
New blossoms flourish, and new flowers arise;
As God had been abroad, and, walking there,
Had left his footsteps, and reform'd the year:
The sunny hills from far were seen to glow
With glittering beams, and in the meads below
The burnish'd brooks appear'd with liquid gold to flow.
At last they heard the foolish Cuckoo sing,
Whose note proclaim'd the holiday of spring.
No longer doubting, all prepare to fly,
And repossess their patrimonial sky.
The priest before them did his wings display;

And that good omens might attend their way,
As luck would have it, 'twas St. Martin's day.
Who but the Swallow now triumphs alone?
The canopy of heaven is all her own:
Her youthful offspring to their haunts repair,
And glide along in glades, and skim in air,
And dip for insects in the purling springs,
And stoop on rivers to refresh their wings.
Their mothers think a fair provision made,
That every son can live upon his trade:
And, now the careful charge is off their hands,
Look out for husbands, and new nuptial bands:
The youthful widow longs to be supplied;
But first the lover is by lawyers tied
To settle jointure-chimneys on the bride.
So thick they couple, in so short a space,
That Martin's marriage-offerings rise apace.
Their ancient houses, running to decay,
Are furbish'd up, and cemented with clay;
They teem already; stores of eggs are laid,
And brooding mothers call Lucina's aid.
Fame spreads the news, and foreign fowls appear
In flocks to greet the new returning year,
To bless the founder, and partake the cheer.
And now 'twas time (so fast their numbers rise)
To plant abroad, and people colonies.
The youth drawn forth, as Martin had desired,
(For so their cruel destiny required)
Were sent far off on an ill-fated day;
The rest would needs conduct them on their way,
And Martin went, because he fear'd alone to stay.
So long they flew with inconsiderate haste,
That now their afternoon began to waste;
And, what was ominous, that very morn
The sun was enter'd into Capricorn;
Which, by their bad astronomer's account,
That week the Virgin balance should remount.
An infant moon eclipsed him in his way,
And hid the small remainders of his day.
The crowd, amazed, pursued no certain mark;
But birds met birds, and justled in the dark:
Few mind the public in a panic fright;
And fear increased the horror of the night.

Night came, but unattended with repose;
Alone she came, no sleep their eyes to close:
Alone, and black she came; no friendly stars arose.
What should they do, beset with dangers round,
No neighbouring dorp, no lodging to be found,
But bleaky plains, and bare unhospitable ground.
The latter brood, who just began to fly,
Sick-feather'd, and unpractised in the sky,
For succour to their helpless mother call;
She spread her wings; some few beneath them crawl;
She spread them wider yet, but could not cover all.
To augment their woes, the winds began to move
Debate in air, for empty fields above,
'Till Boreas got the skies, and pour'd amain
His rattling hailstones mix'd with snow and rain.
The joyless morning late arose, and found
A dreadful desolation reign around,
Some buried in the snow, some frozen to the ground.
The rest were struggling still with death, and lay
The Crows' and Ravens' rights, an undefended prey:
Excepting Martin's race, for they and he
Had gain'd the shelter of a hollow tree;
But soon discover'd by a sturdy clown,
He headed all the rabble of a town,
And finish'd them with bats, or poll'd them down.
Martin himself was caught alive, and tried
For treasonous crimes, because the laws provide
No Martin there in winter shall abide.
High on an oak, which never leaf shall bear,
He breathed his last, exposed to open air;
And there his corpse, unbless'd, is hanging still,
To show the change of winds with his prophetic bill.'
The patience of the Hind did almost fail;
For well she mark'd the malice of the tale:
Which ribald art their Church to Luther owes;
In malice it began, by malice grows;
He sow'd the serpent's teeth, an iron-harvest rose.
But most in Martin's character and fate,
She saw her slander'd sons, the Panther's hate,
The people's rage, the persecuting state:
Then said,—'I take the advice in friendly part;
You clear your conscience, or at least your heart:
Perhaps you fail'd in your foreseeing skill,
For Swallows are unlucky birds to kill:

As for my sons, the family is bless'd,
Whose every child is equal to the rest:
No Church reform'd can boast a blameless line;
Such Martins build in yours, and more than mine:
Or else an old fanatic author lies,
Who summ'd their scandals up by centuries.
But through your parable I plainly see
The bloody laws, the crowd's barbarity;
The sunshine that offends the purblind sight:
Had some their wishes, it would soon be night.
Mistake me not, the charge concerns not you;
Your sons are malecontents, but yet are true,
As far as non-resistance makes them so;
But that 's a word of neutral sense, you know,
A passive term, which no relief will bring,
But trims betwixt a rebel and a king.'
'Rest well assured, (the Pardelis replied,)
My sons would all support the regal side,
Though Heaven forbid the cause by battle should be tried.'
The matron answer'd with a loud Amen,
And thus pursued her argument again.
'If, as you say, and as I hope no less,
Your sons will practise what yourselves profess,
What angry power prevents our present peace?
The Lion, studious of our common good,
Desires (and Kings' desires are ill withstood)
To join our nations in a lasting love;
The bars betwixt are easy to remove;
For sanguinary laws were never made above.
If you condemn that prince of tyranny,
Whose mandate forced your Gallic friends to fly,
Make not a worse example of your own;
Or cease to rail at causeless rigour shown,
And let the guiltless person throw the stone.
His blunted sword your suffering brotherhood
Have seldom felt; he stops it short of blood:
But you have ground the persecuting knife,
And set it to a razor-edge on life.
Cursed be the wit, which cruelty refines,
Or to his father's rod the scorpion joins;
Your finger is more gross than the great monarch's loins.
But you, perhaps, remove that bloody note,
And stick it on the first Reformers' coat.

Oh, let their crime in long oblivion sleep:
'Twas theirs indeed to make, 'tis yours to keep.
Unjust, or just, is all the question now;
'Tis plain, that not repealing you allow.
To name the Test would put you in a rage;
You charge not that on any former age,
But smile to think how innocent you stand,
Arm'd by a weapon put into your hand.
Yet still remember, that you wield a sword
Forged by your foes against your Sovereign Lord;
Design'd to hew the imperial cedar down,
Defraud succession, and dis-heir the crown.
To abhor the makers, and their laws approve,
Is to hate traitors, and the treason love.
What means it else, which now your children say,
We made it not, nor will we take away?
Suppose some great oppressor had, by slight
Of law, disseized your brother of his right,
Your common sire surrendering in a fright;
Would you to that unrighteous title stand,
Left by the villain's will to heir the land?
More just was Judas, who his Saviour sold;
The sacrilegious bribe he could not hold,
Nor hang in peace, before he render'd back the gold
What more could you have done, than now you do,
Had Oates and Bedloe, and their plot been true?
Some specious reasons for those wrongs were found;
The dire magicians threw their mists around,
And wise men walk'd as on enchanted ground.
But now, when Time has made the imposture plain,
(Late though he follow'd Truth, and limping held her train)
What new delusion charms your cheated eyes again?
The painted harlot might a while bewitch,
But why the hag uncased, and all obscene with itch?
The first Reformers were a modest race;
Our peers possess'd in peace their native place;
And when rebellious arms o'erturn'd the state,
They suffer'd only in the common fate:
But now the Sovereign mounts the regal chair,
And mitred seats are full, yet David's bench is bare.
Your answer is, they were not dispossess'd;
They need but rub their metal on the Test
To prove their ore: 'twere well if gold alone
Were touch'd and tried on your discerning stone;

But that unfaithful Test unfound will pass
The dross of Atheists, and sectarian brass:
As if the experiment were made to hold
For base production, and reject the gold.
Thus men ungodded may to places rise,
And sects may be preferr'd without disguise:
No danger to the Church or State from these;
The Papist only has his writ of ease.
No gainful office gives him the pretence
To grind the subject, or defraud the prince.
Wrong conscience, or no conscience, may deserve
To thrive, but ours alone is privileged to sterve.
Still thank yourselves, you cry; your noble race
We banish not, but they forsake the place;
Our doors are open: true, but ere they come,
You toss your 'censing Test, and fume the room;
As if 'twere Toby's rival to expel,
And fright the fiend who could not bear the smell.'
To this the Panther sharply had replied;
But, having gain'd a verdict on her side,
She wisely gave the loser leave to chide;
Well satisfied to have the But and Peace,
And for the plaintiff's cause she cared the less,
Because she sued *in formâ pauperis;*
Yet thought it decent something should be said;
For secret guilt by silence is betray'd.
So neither granted all, nor much denied,
But answer'd with a yawning kind of pride:
'Methinks such terms of proffer'd peace you bring,
As once Æneas to the Italian king:
By long possession all the land is mine;
You strangers come with your intruding line,
To share my sceptre, which you call to join.
You plead like him an ancient pedigree,
And claim a peaceful seat by fate's decree.
In ready pomp your sacrificer stands,
To unite the Trojan and the Latin bands,
And, that the league more firmly may be tied,
Demand the fair Lavinia for your bride.
Thus plausibly you veil the intended wrong,
But still you bring your exiled gods along;
And will endeavour, in succeeding space,
Those household-puppets on our hearths to place.

Perhaps some barbarous laws have been preferr'd;
I spake against the Test, but was not heard;
These to rescind, and peerage to restore,
My gracious Sovereign would my vote implore:
I owe him much, but owe my conscience more.'
'Conscience is then your plea, (replied the dame,)
Which, well inform'd, will ever be the same.
But yours is much of the chameleon hue,
To change the dye with every distant view.
When first the Lion sat with awful sway,
Your conscience taught your duty to obey:
He might have had your Statutes and your Test;
No conscience but of subjects was profess'd.
He found your temper, and no farther tried,
But on that broken reed—your Church, relied.
In vain the sects assay'd their utmost art,
With offer'd treasure to espouse their part;
Their treasures were a bribe too mean to move his heart.
But when, by long experience, you had proved,
How far he could forgive, how well he loved;
A goodness that excell'd his godlike race,
And only short of Heaven's unbounded grace;
A flood of mercy that o'erflow'd our isle,
Calm in the rise, and fruitful as the Nile;
Forgetting whence our Egypt was supplied,
You thought your Sovereign bound to send the tide:
Nor upward look'd on that immortal spring,
But vainly deem'd, he durst not be a king:
Then conscience, unrestrain'd by fear, began
To stretch her limits, and extend the span;
Did his indulgence as her gift dispose,
And made a wise alliance with her foes.
Can Conscience own the associating name,
And raise no blushes to conceal her shame?
For sure she has been thought a bashful dame.
But if the cause by battle should be tried,
You grant she must espouse the regal side:
Oh Proteus conscience, never to be tied!
What Phœbus from the Tripod shall disclose,
Which are, in last resort, your friends or foes?
Homer, who learn'd the language of the sky,
The seeming Gordian knot would soon untie;
Immortal powers the term of Conscience know,
But Interest is her name with men below.'

'Conscience or Interest be 't, or both in one,
(The Panther answer'd in a surly tone)
The first commands me to maintain the crown,
The last forbids to throw my barriers down.
Our penal laws no sons of yours admit,
Our Test excludes your tribe from benefit.
These are my banks your ocean to withstand,
Which proudly rising overlooks the land;
And, once let in, with unresisted sway,
Would sweep the pastors and their flocks away.
Think not my judgment leads me to comply
With laws unjust, but hard necessity:
Imperious need, which cannot be withstood,
Makes ill authentic, for a greater good.
Possess your soul with patience, and attend:
A more auspicious planet may ascend;
Good fortune may present some happier time,
With means to cancel my unwilling crime;
(Unwilling, witness all ye Powers above)
To mend my errors, and redeem your love:
That little space you safely may allow;
Your all-dispensing power protects you now.'
'Hold, (said the Hind,) 'tis needless to explain;
You would postpone me to another reign;
'Till when you are content to be unjust:
Your part is to possess, and mine to trust.
A fair exchange proposed of future chance,
For present profit and inheritance.
Few words will serve to finish our dispute;
Who will not now repeal, would persecute.
To ripen green revenge your hopes attend,
Wishing that happier planet would ascend.
For shame! let Conscience be your plea no more:
To will hereafter, proves she might before;
But she 's a bawd to Gain, and holds the door.
Your care about your banks infers a fear
Of threatening floods and inundations near:
If so, a just reprise would only be
Of what the land usurp'd upon the sea;
And all your jealousies but serve to show
Your ground is, like your neighbour-nation, low.
To intrench in what you grant unrighteous laws,
Is to distrust the justice of your cause;

And argues that the true religion lies
In those weak adversaries you despise.
Tyrannic force is that which least you fear;
The sound is frightful in a Christian's ear:
Avert it, Heaven! nor let that plague be sent
To us from the dispeopled continent.
But piety commands me to refrain;
Those prayers are needless in this monarch's reign,
Behold! how he protects your friends oppress'd,
Receives the banish'd, succours the distress'd:
Behold, for you may read an honest open breast.
He stands in daylight, and disdains to hide
An act, to which by honour he is tied,
A generous, laudable, and kingly pride.
Your Test he would repeal, his peers restore;
This when he says he means, he means no more.'
'Well, (said the Panther,) I believe him just,
And yet ——'
'And yet, 'tis but because you must;
You would be trusted, but you would not trust.'
(The Hind thus briefly;) and disdain'd to enlarge
On power of Kings, and their superior charge,
As Heaven's trustees before the people's choice:
Though sure the Panther did not much rejoice
To hear those echoes given of her once loyal voice.
The matron woo'd her kindness to the last,
But could not win; her hour of grace was pass'd.
Whom, thus persisting, when she could not bring
To leave the Wolf, and to believe her King,
She gave her up, and fairly wish'd her joy
Of her late treaty with her new ally:
Which well she hoped would more successful prove,
Than was the Pigeon's and the Buzzard's love.
The Panther ask'd, 'what concord there could be
Betwixt two kinds whose natures disagree?'
The dame replied: ''Tis sung in every street,
The common chat of gossips when they meet:
But, since unheard by you, 'tis worth your while
To take a wholesome tale, though told in homely style.
A plain good man, whose name is understood,
(So few deserve the name of plain and good)
Of three fair lineal lordships stood possess'd,
And lived, as reason was, upon the best.

Inured to hardships from his early youth,
Much had he done, and suffer'd for his truth:
At land and sea, in many a doubtful fight,
Was never known a more adventurous knight,
Who oftener drew his sword, and always for the right.
As fortune would, (his fortune came, though late)
He took possession of his just estate:
Nor rack'd his tenants with increase of rent;
Nor lived too sparing, nor too largely spent;
But overlook'd his hinds; their pay was just,
And ready, for he scorn'd to go on trust:
Slow to resolve, but in performance quick;
So true, that he was awkward at a trick.
For little souls on little shifts rely,
And coward arts of mean expedients try;
The noble mind will dare do any-thing but lie.
False friends (his deadliest foes) could find no way
But shows of honest bluntness, to betray:
That unsuspected plainness he believed;
He look'd into himself, and was deceived.
Some lucky planet sure attends his birth,
Or Heaven would make a miracle on earth;
For prosperous honesty is seldom seen
To bear so dead a weight, and yet to win.
It looks as fate with nature's law would strive,
To show plain-dealing once an age may thrive:
And, when so tough a frame she could not bend,
Exceeded her commission to befriend.
This grateful man, as Heaven increased his store,
Gave God again, and daily fed his poor.
His house with all convenience was purvey'd;
The rest he found, but raised the fabric where he pray'd;
And in that sacred place his beauteous wife
Employ'd her happiest hours of holy life.
Nor did their alms extend to those alone,
Whom common faith more strictly made their own;
A sort of Doves were housed too near their hall,
Who cross the proverb, and abound with gall.
Though some, 'tis true, are passively inclined,
The greater part degenerate from their kind;
Voracious birds, that hotly bill and breed,
And largely drink, because on salt they feed.
Small gain from them their bounteous owner draws;

Yet, bound by promise, he supports their cause,
As corporations privileged by laws.
That house which harbour to their kind affords,
Was built, long since, God knows, for better birds,
But fluttering there, they nestle near the throne,
And lodge in habitations not their own,
By their high crops and corny gizzards known.
Like Harpies, they could scent a plenteous board,
Then to be sure they never fail'd their lord:
The rest was form, and bare attendance paid;
They drunk, and eat, and grudgingly obey'd.
The more they fed, they raven'd still for more;
They drain'd from Dan, and left Beersheba poor.
All this they had by law, and none repined;
The preference was but due to Levi's kind:
But when some lay preferment fell by chance,
The Gourmands made it their inheritance.
When once possess'd they never quit their claim;
For then 'tis sanctified to Heaven's high name;
And hallow'd thus, they cannot give consent,
The gift should be profaned by worldly management.
Their flesh was never to the table served;
Though 'tis not thence infer'd the birds were starved;
But that their master did not like the food,
As rank, and breeding melancholy blood:
Nor did it with his gracious nature suit,
E'en though they were not Doves, to persecute
Yet he refused (nor could they take offence)
Their glutton kind should teach him abstinence.
Nor consecrated grain their wheat he thought,
Which, new from treading, in their bills they brought:
But left his hinds each in his private power,
That those who like the bran might leave the flour.
He for himself, and not for others, chose,
Nor would he be imposed on, nor impose;
But in their faces his devotion paid,
And sacrifice with solemn rites was made,
And sacred incense on his altars laid.
Besides these jolly birds, whose crops impure
Repaid their commons with their salt-manure;
Another farm he had behind his house,
Not overstock'd, but barely for his use:
Wherein his poor domestic poultry fed,
And from his pious hands received their bread.

Our pamper'd Pigeons, with malignant eyes,
Beheld these inmates, and their nurseries:
Though hard their fare, at evening, and at morn,
A cruse of water and an ear of corn;
Yet still they grudged that modicum, and thought
A sheaf in every single grain was brought.
Fain would they filch that little food away,
While unrestrain'd those happy gluttons prey.
And much they grieved to see so nigh their hall,
The bird that warn'd St. Peter of his fall;
That he should raise his mitred crest on high,
And clap his wings, and call his family
To sacred rites; and vex the ethereal powers
With midnight matins at uncivil hours:
Nay more, his quiet neighbours should molest,
Just in the sweetness of their morning rest.
Beast of a bird, supinely when he might
Lie snug and sleep, to rise before the light!
What if his dull forefathers used that cry,
Could he not let a bad example die?
The world was fallen into an easier way;
This age knew better than to fast and pray.
Good sense in sacred worship would appear
So to begin, as they might end the year.
Such feats in former times had wrought the falls
Of crowing Chanticleers in cloister'd walls.
Expell'd for this, and for their lands, they fled;
And sister Partlet, with her hooded head,
Was hooted hence, because she would not pray a-bed.
The way to win the restive world to God,
Was to lay by the disciplining rod,
Unnatural fasts, and foreign forms of prayer:
Religion frights us with a mien severe.
'Tis prudence to reform her into ease,
And put her in undress to make her please:
A lively faith will bear aloft the mind,
And leave the luggage of good works behind.
Such doctrines in the Pigeon-house were taught:
You need not ask how wondrously they wrought;
But sure the common cry was all for these,
Whose life and precepts both encouraged ease.
Yet fearing those alluring baits might fail,
And holy deeds o'er all their arts prevail;

(For vice, though frontless, and of harden'd face,
Is daunted at the sight of awful grace,)
An hideous figure of their foes they drew,
Nor lines, nor looks, nor shades, nor colours true;
And this grotesque design exposed to public view.
One would have thought it some Egyptian piece,
With garden-gods, and barking deities,
More thick than Ptolemy has stuck the skies.
All so perverse a draught, so far unlike,
It was no libel where it meant to strike.
Yet still the daubing pleased, and great and small,
To view the monster, crowded Pigeon-hall.
There Chanticleer was drawn upon his knees
Adoring shrines, and stocks of sainted trees;
And by him, a misshapen, ugly race;
The curse of God was seen on every face.
No Holland emblem could that malice mend,
But still the worse the look, the fitter for a fiend.
The master of the farm, displeased to find
So much of rancour in so mild a kind,
Inquired into the cause, and came to know,
The Passive Church had struck the foremost blow;
With groundless fears, and jealousies possess'd,
As if this troublesome intruding guest
Would drive the birds of Venus from their nest.
A deed his inborn equity abhorr'd;
But Interest will not trust, though God should plight his word.
A law, the source of many future harms,
Had banish'd all the poultry from the farms;
With loss of life, if any should be found
To crow or peck on this forbidden ground.
That bloody statute chiefly was design'd
For Chanticleer the white, of clergy kind;
But after-malice did not long forget
The lay that wore the robe and coronet.
For them, for their inferiors and allies,
Their foes a deadly Shibboleth devise:
By which unrighteously it was decreed,
That none to trust, or profit, should succeed,
Who would not swallow first a poisonous wicked weed:
Or that, to which old Socrates was cursed,
Or henbane juice to swell them till they burst

The patron (as in reason) thought it hard
To see this inquisition in his yard,
By which the Sovereign was of subjects' use debarr'd.
All gentle means he tried, which might withdraw
The effects of so unnatural a law:
But still the Dove-house obstinately stood
Deaf to their own, and to their neighbours' good;
And which was worse, (if any worse could be,)
Repented of their boasted loyalty:
Now made the champions of a cruel cause,
And drunk with fumes of popular applause;
For those whom God to ruin has design'd,
He fits for fate, and first destroys their mind.
New doubts indeed they daily strove to raise,
Suggested dangers, interposed delays:
And emissary Pigeons had in store,
Such as the Meccan prophet used of yore,
To whisper counsels in their patron's ear;
And veil'd their false advice with zealous fear.
The master smiled to see them work in vain,
To wear him out, and make an idle reign:
He saw, but suffer'd their protractive arts,
And strove by mildness to reduce their hearts:
But they abused that grace to make allies,
And fondly closed with former enemies;
For fools are doubly fools, endeav'ring to be wise.
After a grave consult what course were best,
One, more mature in folly than the rest,
Stood up, and told them, with his head aside,
That desperate cures must be to desperate ills applied:
And therefore, since their main impending fear
Was from the increasing race of Chanticleer,
Some potent bird of prey they ought to find,
A foe profess'd to him, and all his kind:
Some haggard Hawk, who had her eyrie nigh,
Well pounced to fasten, and well wing'd to fly;
One they might trust, their common wrongs to wreak;
The Musquet, and the Coystrel were too weak,
Too fierce the Falcon; but, above the rest,
The noble Buzzard ever pleased me best;
Of small renown, 'tis true, for, not to lie,
We call him but a Hawk by courtesy.
I know he hates the Pigeon-house and Farm,
And more, in time of war, has done us harm:

But all his hate on trivial points depends;
Give up our forms, and we shall soon be friends.
For Pigeons' flesh he seems not much to care;
Cramm'd Chickens are a more delicious fare.
On this high potentate, without delay,
I wish you would confer the sovereign sway:
Petition him to accept the government,
And let a splendid embassy be sent.
This pithy speech prevail'd, and all agreed,
Old enmities forgot, the Buzzard should succeed
Their welcome suit was granted soon as heard
His lodgings furnish'd, and a train prepared,
With B's upon their breast, appointed for his guard
He came, and crown'd with great solemnity,
God save king Buzzard was the general cry.
A portly prince, and goodly to the sight,
He seem'd a son of Anak for his height:
Like those whom stature did to crowns prefer:
Black-brow'd, and bluff, like Homer's Jupiter:
Broad-back'd, and brawny-built for love's delight:
A prophet form'd to make a female proselyte.
A theologue more by need than genial bent;
By breeding sharp, by nature confident.
Interest in all his actions was discern'd;
More learn'd than honest, more a wit than learn'd:
Or forced by fear, or by his profit led,
Or both conjoin'd, his native clime he fled:
But brought the virtues of his heaven along:
A fair behaviour, and a fluent tongue.
And yet with all his arts he could not thrive;
The most unlucky parasite alive.
Loud praises to prepare his paths he sent,
And then himself pursued his compliment;
But by reverse of fortune chased away,
His gifts no longer than their author stay:
He shakes the dust against the ungrateful race,
And leaves the stench of ordures in the place.
Oft has he flatter'd and blasphemed the same;
For in his rage he spares no Sovereign's name:
The hero and the tyrant change their style
By the same measure that they frown or smile.
When well received by hospitable foes,
The kindness he returns, is to expose:

For courtesies, though undeserved and great,
No gratitude in felon-minds beget;
As tribute to his wit, the churl receives the treat.
His praise of foes is venomously nice;
So touch'd, it turns a virtue to a vice:
"A Greek, and bountiful, forewarns us twice."
Seven sacraments he wisely does disown,
Because he knows Confession stands for one;
Where sins to sacred silence are convey'd,
And not for fear, or love, to be betray'd:
But he, uncall'd, his patron to control,
Divulged the secret whispers of his soul;
Stood forth the accusing Satan of his crimes,
And offer'd to the Moloch of the times.
Prompt to assail, and careless of defence,
Invulnerable in his impudence,
He dares the world; and eager of a name,
He thrusts about, and justles into fame.
Frontless, and satire-proof, he scours the streets,
And runs an Indian-muck at all he meets.
So fond of loud report, that not to miss
Of being known (his last and utmost bliss)
He rather would be known for what he is.
  Such was, and is, the Captain of the Test,
Though half his virtues are not here express'd;
The modesty of fame conceals the rest.
The spleenful Pigeons never could create
A prince more proper to revenge their hate:
Indeed, more proper to revenge, than save;
A king, whom in his wrath the Almighty gave:
For all the grace the landlord had allow'd,
But made the Buzzard and the Pigeons proud;
Gave time to fix their friends, and to seduce the crowd.
They long their fellow-subjects to inthral,
Their patron's promise into question call,
And vainly think he meant to make them lords of all.
  False fears their leaders fail'd not to suggest,
As if the Doves were to be dispossess'd;
Nor sighs, nor groans, nor goggling eyes did want;
For now the Pigeons too had learn'd to cant.
The house of prayer is stock'd with large increase;
Nor doors, nor windows can contain the press:
For birds of every feather fill the abode;
E'en Atheists out of envy own a God:

And, reeking from the stews, adulterers come,
Like Goths and Vandals, to demolish Rome.
That Conscience, which to all their crimes was mute,
Now calls aloud, and cries to persecute:
No rigour of the laws to be released,
And much the less, because it was their Lord's request:
They thought it great their Sovereign to control,
And named their pride, nobility of soul.
'Tis true, the Pigeons, and their prince elect,
Were short of power, their purpose to effect:
But with their quills did all the hurt they could,
And cuff'd the tender Chickens from their food:
And much the Buzzard in their cause did stir,
Though naming not the patron, to infer,
With all respect, he was a gross idolater.
But when the imperial owner did espy,
That thus they turn'd his grace to villany,
Not suffering wrath to discompose his mind,
He strove a temper for the extremes to find,
So to be just, as he might still be kind;
Then, all maturely weigh'd, pronounced a doom
Of sacred strength for every age to come.
By this the Doves their wealth and state possess,
No rights infringed, but licence to oppress:
Such power have they as factious lawyers long
To crowns ascribed,—that Kings can do no wrong.
But since his own domestic birds have tried
The dire effects of their destructive pride,
He deems that proof a measure to the rest,
Concluding well within his kingly breast,
His fowls of nature too unjustly were oppress'd.
He therefore makes all birds of every sect
Free of his farm, with promise to respect
Their several kinds alike, and equally protect.
His gracious edict the same franchise yields
To all the wild increase of woods and fields,
And who in rocks aloof, and who in steeples builds:
To Crows the like impartial grace affords,
And Choughs and Daws, and such republic birds:
Secured with ample privilege to feed,
Each has his district, and his bounds decreed:
Combined in common interest with his own,
But not to pass the Pigeons' Rubicon.

Here ends the reign of this pretended Dove;
All prophecies accomplish'd from above;
For Shiloh comes the sceptre to remove.
Reduced from her imperial high abode,
Like Dionysius to a private rod,
The Passive Church, that with pretended grace
Did her distinctive mark in duty place,
Now touch'd, reviles her Maker to his face.
What after happen'd is not hard to guess:
The small beginnings had a large increase,
And arts and wealth succeed (the secret spoils of peace).
'Tis said, the Doves repented, though too late,
Become the smiths of their own foolish fate:
Nor did their owner hasten their ill hour;
But, sunk in credit, they decreased in power:
Like snows in warmth, that mildly pass away,
Dissolving in the silence of decay.

The Buzzard, not content with equal place,
Invites the feather'd Nimrods of his race;
To hide the thinness of their flock from sight,
And altogether make a seeming goodly flight:
But each have separate interests of their own;
Two Czars are one too many for a throne.
Nor can the usurper long abstain from food;
Already he has tasted Pigeons' blood:
And may be tempted to his former fare,
When this indulgent lord shall late to heaven repair.
Bare-benting times, and moulting months may come,
When, lagging late, they cannot reach their home;
Or rent in schism (for so their fate decrees)
Like the tumultuous college of the bees,
They fight their quarrel, by themselves oppress'd;
The tyrant smiles below, and waits the falling feast.'

Thus did the gentle Hind her fable end,
Nor would the Panther blame it, nor commend,
But, with affected yawnings at the close,
Seem'd to require her natural repose:
For now the streaky light began to peep,
And setting stars admonish'd both to sleep;
The dame withdrew, and, wishing to her guest
The peace of Heaven, betook herself to rest.

Ten thousand angels on her slumbers wait,
With glorious visions of her future state!

BRITANNIA REDIVIVA;

A POEM ON THE BIRTH OF JAMES PRINCE OF WALES, (THE PRETENDER.)

Our vows are heard betimes! and Heaven takes care
To grant, before we can conclude the prayer:
Preventing angels met it half the way,
And sent us back to praise, who came to pray.
Just on the day, when the high-mounted sun
Did farthest in his northern progress run,
He bended forward, and ev'n stretch'd the sphere
Beyond the limits of the lengthen'd year,
To view a brighter sun in Britain born;
That was the business of his longest morn;
The glorious object seen, 'twas time to turn.
Departing Spring could only stay to shed
Her bloomy beauties on the genial bed,
But left the manly Summer in her stead,
With timely fruit the longing land to cheer,
And to fulfil the promise of the year.
Betwixt two seasons comes the auspicious heir,
This age to blossom, and the next to bear.
Last solemn sabbath saw the Church attend;
The Paraclete in fiery pomp descend;
But when his wondrous octave roll'd again,
He brought a royal infant in his train.
So great a blessing to so good a king,
None but the Eternal Comforter could bring.
Or did the mighty Trinity conspire,
As once, in council to create our sire?
It seems as if they sent the new-born guest
To wait on the procession of their feast;
And on their sacred anniverse decreed
To stamp their image on the promised seed.
Three realms united, and on one bestow'd,
An emblem of their mystic union show'd:
The Mighty Trine the triple empire shared,
As every person would have one to guard.
Hail, son of prayers! by holy violence
Drawn down from Heaven; but long be banish'd thence,
And late to thy paternal skies retire:
To mend our crimes whole ages would require;

To change the inveterate habit of our sins,
And finish what thy godlike sire begins.
Kind Heaven, to make us Englishmen again,
No less can give us than a patriarch's reign.
The sacred cradle to your charge receive,
Ye seraphs, and by turns the guard relieve;
Thy father's angel, and thy father join,
To keep possession, and secure the line;
But long defer the honours of thy fate:
Great may they be like his, like his be late;
That James this running century may view,
And give his son an auspice to the new.
Our wants exact at least that moderate stay:
For see the Dragon winged on his way,
To watch the travail, and devour the prey.
Or, if allusions may not rise so high,
Thus, when Alcides raised his infant-cry,
The snakes besieged his young divinity:
But vainly with their forked tongues they threat;
For opposition makes a hero great.
To needful succour all the good will run,
And Jove assert the godhead of his son.
Oh still repining at your present state,
Grudging yourselves the benefits of fate,
Look up, and read in characters of light
A blessing sent you in your own despite.
The manna falls, yet that celestial bread
Like Jews, you munch, and murmur while you feed.
May not your fortune be like their's, exiled,
Yet forty years to wander in the wild:
Or if it be, may Moses live at least,
To lead you to the verge of promised rest.
Though poets are not prophets, to foreknow
What plants will take the blight, and what will grow,
By tracing Heaven his footsteps may be found:
Behold! how awfully he walks the round!
God is abroad, and, wondrous in his ways,
The rise of empires, and their fall surveys;
More (might I say) than with an usual eye,
He sees his bleeding Church in ruin lie,
And hears the souls of saints beneath his altar cry.
Already has he lifted high the sign,*
Which crown'd the conquering arms of Constantine:

* The cross.

The moon* grows pale at that presaging sight,
And half her train of stars have lost their light.
Behold another Sylvester,† to bless
The sacred standard, and secure success;
Large of his treasures, of a soul so great,
As fills and crowds his universal seat.
Now view at home a second Constantine;‡
(The former too was of the British line§)
Has not his healing balm your breaches closed
Whose exile many sought, and few opposed?
Or, did not Heaven by its eternal doom
Permit those evils, that this good might come?
So manifest, that e'en the moon-eyed sects
See whom and what this Providence protects.
Methinks, had we within our minds no more
Than that one shipwreck on the fatal ore,
That only thought may make us think again,
What wonders God reserves for such a reign.
To dream that chance his preservation wrought,
Were to think Noah was preserved for nought;
Or the surviving eight were not design'd
To people earth, and to restore their kind.
When humbly on the royal babe we gaze,
The manly lines of a majestic face
Give awful joy: 'tis paradise to look
On the fair frontispiece of Nature's book:
If the first opening page so charms the sight,
Think how the unfolded volume will delight!
See how the venerated infant lies
In early pomp; how through the mother's eyes
The father's soul, with an undaunted view,
Looks out, and takes our homage as his due.
See on his future subjects how he smiles,
Nor meanly flatters, nor with craft beguiles;
But with an open face, as on his throne,
Assures our birthrights, and assumes his own.
Born in broad day-light, that the ungrateful rout
May find no room for a remaining doubt;
Truth, which itself is light, does darkness shun,
And the true eaglet safely dares the sun.

* The crescent which the Turks bear for their arms.
† The Pope in the time of Constantine the Great.
‡ King James the Second.
§ St. Helen, mother of Constantine the Great, was an Englishwoman

Fain would the fiends have made a dubious birth,
Loth to confess the godhead clothed in earth:
But sicken'd, after all their baffled lies,
To find an heir-apparent of the skies:
Abandon'd to despair, still may they grudge,
And, owning not the Saviour, prove the judge.
Not great Æneas stood in plainer day,
When, the dark mantling mist dissolved away,
He to the Tyrians show'd his sudden face,
Shining with all his goddess-mother's grace:
For she herself had made his countenance bright,
Breathed honour on his eyes, and her own purple light.
If our victorious Edward,* as they say,
Gave Wales a prince on that propitious day,
Why may not years revolving with his fate
Produce his like, but with a longer date?
One, who may carry to a distant shore
The terror that his famed forefather bore.
But why should James or his young hero stay
For slight presages of a name or day?
We need no Edward's fortune to adorn
That happy moment when our prince was born:
Our prince adorns his day, and ages hence
Shall wish his birth-day for some future prince.
Great Michael, prince of all the ethereal hosts,
And whate'er inborn saints our Britain boasts;
And thou,† the adopted patron of our isle,
With cheerful aspects on this infant smile:
The pledge of Heaven, which, dropping from above,
Secures our bliss, and reconciles his love.
Enough of ills our dire rebellion wrought,
When, to the dregs, we drank the bitter draught;
Then airy atoms did in plagues conspire,
Nor did the avenging angel yet retire,
But purged our still increasing crimes with fire.
Then perjured Plots, the still impending Test,
And worse—but charity conceals the rest:
Here stop the current of the sanguine flood;
Require not, gracious God, thy martyrs' blood;
But let their dying pangs, their living toil,
Spread a rich harvest through their native soil:

* Edward the Black Prince, born on Trinity Sunday.
† St. George.

A harvest ripening for another reign,
Of which this royal babe may reap the grain.
Enough of early saints one womb has given;
Enough increased the family of heaven:
Let them for his and our atonement go;
And reigning blest above, leave him to rule below.
Enough already has the year foreslow'd
His wonted course, the sea has overflow'd,
The meads were floated with a weeping spring,
And frighten'd birds in woods forgot to sing:
The strong-limb'd steed beneath his harness faints,
And the same shivering sweat his lord attaints.
When will the minister of wrath give o'er?
Behold him, at Araunah's threshing-floor:
He stops, and seems to sheathe his flaming brand,
Pleased with burnt incense from our David's hand.
David has bought the Jebusite's abode,
And raised an altar to the living God.
Heaven, to reward him, makes his joys sincere;
No future ills nor accidents appear,
To sully and pollute the sacred infant's year.
Five months to discord and debate were given:
He sanctifies the yet remaining seven.
Sabbath of months! henceforth in him be blest,
And prelude to the realms perpetual rest!
Let his baptismal drops for us atone;
Lustrations for offences not his own.
Let Conscience, which is Interest ill disguised,
In the same font be cleansed, and all the land baptized.
Unnamed as yet; at least unknown to fame:
Is there a strife in heaven about his name?
Where every famous predecessor vies,
And makes a faction for it in the skies?
Or must it be reserved to thought alone?
Such was the sacred Tetragrammaton.
Things worthy silence must not be reveal'd:
Thus the true name of Rome was kept conceal'd,
To shun the spells and sorceries of those
Who durst her infant Majesty oppose.
But when his tender strength in time shall rise
To dare ill tongues, and fascinating eyes;
This isle, which hides the little thunderer's fame,
Shall be too narrow to contain his name:

The artillery of heaven shall make him known;
Crete could not hold the god, when Jove was grown.
As Jove's increase, who from his brain was born,
Whom arms and arts did equally adorn,
Free of the breast was bred, whose milky taste
Minerva's name to Venus had debased;
So this imperial babe rejects the food
That mixes monarch's with plebeian blood:
Food that his inborn courage might control,
Extinguish all the father in his soul,
And, for his Estian race, and Saxon strain,
Might reproduce some second Richard's reign.
Mildness he shares from both his parents' blood:
But kings too tame are despicably good:
Be this the mixture of this regal child,
By nature manly, but by virtue mild.
Thus far the furious transport of the news
Had to prophetic madness fired the Muse;
Madness ungovernable, uninspired,
Swift to foretel whatever she desired.
Was it for me the dark abyss to tread,
And read the book which angels cannot read?
How was I punish'd, when the sudden blast,
The face of heaven, and our young sun o'ercast!
Fame, the swift ill, increasing as she roll'd,
Disease, despair, and death, at three reprises told:
At three insulting strides she stalk'd the town,
And, like contagion, struck the loyal down.
Down fell the winnow'd wheat; but mounted high,
The whirlwind bore the chaff, and hid the sky.
Here black rebellion shooting from below,
(As earth's gigantic brood by moments grow)
And here the sons of God are petrified with woe:
An apoplex of grief: so low were driven
The saints, as hardly to defend their heaven.
As, when pent vapours run their hollow round,
Earthquakes, which are convulsions of the ground,
Break bellowing forth, and no confinement brook,
Till the third settles what the former shook;
Such heavings had our souls; till, slow and late,
Our life with his return'd, and faith prevail'd on fate.
By prayers the mighty blessing was implored,
To prayers was granted, and by prayers restored.

So ere the Shunamite a son conceived,
The prophet promised, and the wife believed.
A son was sent, the son so much desired;
But soon upon the mother's knees expired.
The troubled seer approach'd the mournful door,
Ran, pray'd, and sent his pastoral staff before,
Then stretch'd his limbs upon the child, and mourn'd,
'Till warmth, and breath, and a new soul return'd.
Thus Mercy stretches out her hand, and saves
Desponding Peter sinking in the waves.
As when a sudden storm of hail and rain
Beats to the ground the yet unbearded grain,
Think not the hopes of harvest are destroy'd
On the flat field, and on the naked void;
The light, unloaded stem, from tempest freed,
Will raise the youthful honours of his head;
And, soon restored by native vigour, bear
The timely product of the bounteous year.
Nor yet conclude all fiery trials past:
For Heaven will exercise us to the last;
Sometimes will check us in our full career,
With doubtful blessings, and with mingled fear;
That, still depending on his daily grace,
His every mercy for an alms may pass;
With sparing hands will diet us to good,
Preventing surfeits of our pamper'd blood.
So feeds the mother-bird her craving young
With little morsels, and delays them long.
True, this last blessing was a royal feast;
But, where 's the wedding-garment on the guest?
Our manners, as religion were a dream,
Are such as teach the nations to blaspheme.*
In lusts we wallow, and with pride we swell,
And injuries with injuries repel;
Prompt to revenge, not daring to forgive,
Our lives unteach the doctrine we believe.
Thus Israel sinn'd, impenitently hard,
And vainly thought the present ark their guard;
But when the haughty Philistines appear,
They fled, abandon'd to their foes and fear;
Their God was absent, though his ark was there.
Ah! lest our crimes should snatch this pledge away,
And make our joys the blessings of a day!

For we have sinn'd him hence, and that he lives,
God to his promise, not our practice gives.
Our crimes would soon weigh down the guilty scale,
But James, and Mary, and the Church prevail.
Nor Amalek can rout the chosen bands,
While Hur and Aaron hold up Moses' hands.
By living well, let us secure his days,
Moderate in hopes, and humble in our ways.
No force the free-born spirit can constrain,
But charity, and great examples gain.
Forgiveness is our thanks for such a day,
'Tis god-like, God in his own coin to pay.
But you, propitious queen, translated here,
From your mild heaven, to rule our rugged sphere,
Beyond the sunny walks, and circling year:
You, who your native climate have bereft
Of all the virtues, and the vices left;
Whom piety and beauty make their boast,
Though beautiful is well in pious lost;
So lost, as star-light is dissolved away,
And melts into the brightness of the day;
Or gold about the regal diadem,
Lost to improve the lustre of the gem.
What can we add to your triumphant day?
Let the great gift the beauteous giver pay.
For should our thanks awake the rising sun,
And lengthen, as his latest shadows run,
That, tho' the longest day, would soon, too soon be done.
Let angels' voices with their harps conspire,
But keep the auspicious infant from the choir;
Late let him sing above, and let us know
No sweeter music than his cries below.
Nor can I wish to you, great monarch, more
Than such an annual income to your store;
The day which gave this Unit, did not shine
For a less omen, than to fill the Trine.
After a Prince, an Admiral beget;
The Royal Sovereign wants an anchor yet.
Our isle has younger titles still in store,
And when the exhausted land can yield no more,
Your line can force them from a foreign shore.
The name of Great your martial mind will suit;
But justice is your darling attribute:

Of all the Greeks, 'twas but one hero's due,
And, in him, Plutarch prophesied of you.
A prince's favours but on few can fall,
But justice is a virtue shared by all.
Some kings the name of conquerors have assumed,
Some to be great, some to be gods presumed;
But boundless power, and arbitrary lust,
Made tyrants still abhor the name of just;
They shunn'd the praise this god-like virtue gives,
And fear'd a title that reproach'd their lives.
The power, from which all kings derive their state,
Whom they pretend, at least, to imitate,
Is equal both to punish and reward;
For few would love their God, unless they fear'd.
Resistless force and immortality
Make but a lame, imperfect, deity;
Tempests have force unbounded to destroy,
And deathless being even the damn'd enjoy;
And yet Heaven's attributes, both last and first,
One without life, and one with life accurst:
But justice is Heaven's self, so strictly he,
That, could it fail, the Godhead could not be.
This virtue is your own; but life and state
Are one to fortune subject, one to fate:
Equal to all, you justly frown or smile;
Nor hopes nor fears your steady hand beguile;
Yourself our balance hold, the world's, our isle.

EPISTLES.

TO MY FRIEND MR. J. NORTHLEIGH,

AUTHOR OF 'THE PARALLEL,'

ON HIS 'TRIUMPH OF THE BRITISH MONARCHY.'

So Joseph, yet a youth, expounded well
The boding dream, and did th' event foretell;
Judged by the past, and drew the Parallel.
Thus early Solomon the truth explored,
The right awarded, and the babe restored.
Thus Daniel, ere to prophecy he grew,
The perjured Presbyters did first subdue,
And freed Susanna from the canting crew.
Well may our Monarchy triumphant stand,
While warlike James protects both sea and land;
And, under covert of his seven-fold shield,
Thou send'st thy shafts to scour the distant field.
By law thy powerful pen has set us free;
Thou studiest that, and that may study thee.

TO 'MY HONOURED FRIEND,

SIR ROBERT HOWARD,

ON HIS EXCELLENT POEMS.

As there is music uninform'd by art
In those wild notes, which, with a merry heart,
The birds in unfrequented shades express,
Who, better taught at home, yet please us less:
So in your verse a native sweetness dwells,
Which shames composure, and its art excels.
Singing no more can your soft numbers grace,
Than paint add charms unto a beauteous face.
Yet as, when mighty rivers gently creep,
Their even calmness does suppose them deep;
Such is your muse: no metaphor swell'd high
With dangerous boldness lifts her to the sky:

Those mounting fancies, when they fall again,
Show sand and dirt at bottom do remain.
So firm a strength, and yet withal so sweet,
Did never but in Samson's riddle meet.
'Tis strange each line so great a weight should bear,
And yet no sign of toil, no sweat appear.
Either your art hides art, as stoics feign
Then least to feel, when most they suffer pain;
And we, dull souls, admire, but cannot see
What hidden springs within the engine be;
Or 'tis some happiness that still pursues
Each act and motion of your graceful muse.
Or is it fortune's work, that in your head
The curious net that is for fancies spread,
Lets through its meshes every meaner thought,
While rich ideas there are only caught?
Sure that's not all; this is a piece too fair
To be the child of chance, and not of care.
No atoms casually together hurl'd
Could e'er produce so beautiful a world.
Nor dare I such a doctrine here admit,
As would destroy the providence of wit.
'Tis your strong genius then which does not feel
Those weights, would make a weaker spirit reel.
To carry weight, and run so lightly too,
Is what alone your Pegasus can do.
Great Hercules himself could ne'er do more,
Than not to feel those heavens and gods he bore.
Your easier odes, which for delight were penn'd,
Yet our instruction make their second end:
We're both enrich'd and pleased, like them that woo
At once a beauty, and a fortune too.
Of moral knowledge poesy was queen,
And still she might, had wanton wits not been;
Who, like ill guardians, lived themselves at large,
And, not content with that, debauch'd their charge.
Like some brave captain, your successful pen
Restores the exiled to her crown again:
And gives us hope, that having seen the days
When nothing flourish'd but fanatic bays,
All will at length in this opinion rest,
"A sober prince's government is best."
This is not all; your art the way has found
To make the improvement of the richest ground.

That soil which those immortal laurels bore,
That once the sacred Maro's temples wore.
Elissa's griefs are so express'd by you,
They are too eloquent to have been true.
Had she so spoke, Æneas had obey'd
What Dido, rather than what Jove had said.
If funeral rites can give a ghost repose,
Your muse so justly has discharged those,
Elissa's shade may now its wand'ring cease,
And claim a title to the fields of peace.
But if Æneas be obliged, no less
Your kindness great Achilles doth confess;
Who, dress'd by Statius in too bold a look,
Did ill become those virgin robes he took.
To understand how much we owe to you,
We must your numbers, with your author's view:
Then we shall see his work was lamely rough,
Each figure stiff, as if design'd in buff:
His colours laid so thick on every place,
As only show'd the paint, but hid the face.
But as in perspective we beauties see,
Which in the glass, not in the picture, be;
So here our sight obligingly mistakes
That wealth, which his your bounty only makes.
Thus vulgar dishes are, by cooks disguised,
More for their dressing, than their substance prized.
Your curious notes so search into that age,
When all was fable but the sacred page,
That, since in that dark night we needs must stray,
We are at least misled in pleasant way.
But what we most admire, your verse no less
The prophet than the poet doth confess.
Ere our weak eyes discern'd the doubtful streak
Of light, you saw great Charles his morning break:
So skilful seamen ken the land from far,
Which shows like mists to the dull passenger.
To Charles your muse first pays her duteous love,
As still the ancients did begin from Jove.
With Monk you end, whose name preserved shall be,
As Rome recorded Rufus' memory,
Who thought it greater honour to obey
His country's interest, than the world to sway.
But to write worthy things of worthy men,
Is the peculiar talent of your pen:

Yet let me take your mantle up, and I
Will venture in your right to prophesy.
"This work, by merit first of fame secure,
Is likewise happy in its geniture:
For, since 'tis born when Charles ascends the throne,
It shares at once his fortune and its own."

TO MY HONOURED FRIEND,

DR. CHARLETON,

ON HIS LEARNED AND USEFUL WORKS; BUT MORE PARTICULARLY HIS TREATISE OF STONEHENGE.

THE longest tyranny that ever sway'd,
Was that wherein our ancestors betray'd
Their free-born reason to the Stagirite,
And made his torch their universal light.
So truth, while only one supplied the state,
Grew scarce, and dear, and yet sophisticate.
Still it was bought, (like emp'ric wares, or charms,)
Hard words seal'd up with Aristotle's arms.
Columbus was the first that shook his throne,
And found a temperate in a torrid zone:
The feverish air fann'd by a cooling breeze,
The fruitful vales set round with shady trees;
And guiltless men, who danced away their time,
Fresh as their groves, and happy as their clime.
Had we still paid that homage to a name,
Which only God and nature justly claim;
The western seas had been our utmost bound,
Where poets still might dream the sun was drown'd
And all the stars that shine in southern skies,
Had been admired by none but savage eyes.
Among the asserters of free reason's claim,
Our nation's not the least in worth or fame.
The world to Bacon does not only owe
Its present knowledge, but its future too.
Gilbert shall live, till loadstones cease to draw,
Or British fleets the boundless ocean awe;
And noble Boyle, not less in nature seen,
Than his great brother read in states and men.

The circling streams, once thought but pools, of blood
(Whether life's fuel, or the body's food)
From dark oblivion Harvey's name shall save;
While Ent keeps all the honour that he gave.
Nor are you, learned friend, the least renown'd;
Whose fame, not circumscribed with English ground,
Flies like the nimble journeys of the light;
And is, like that, unspent too in its flight.
Whatever truths have been, by art or chance,
Redeem'd from error, or from ignorance,
Thin in their authors, like rich veins of ore,
Your works unite, and still discover more.
Such is the healing virtue of your pen,
To perfect cures on books, as well as men.
Nor is this work the least: you well may give
To men new vigour, who make stones to live.
Through you, the Danes, their short dominion lost,
A longer conquest than the Saxons boast.
Stonehenge, once thought a temple, you have found
A throne, where kings, our earthly gods, were crown'd;
Where by their wond'ring subjects they were seen,
Joy'd with their stature, and their princely mien.
Our sovereign here above the rest might stand,
And here be chose again to rule the land.
These ruins shelter'd once his sacred head,
When he from Wor'ster's fatal battle fled;
Watch'd by the genius of this royal place,
And mighty visions of the Danish race.
His refuge then was for a temple shown:
But, he restored, 'tis now become a throne.

TO THE LADY CASTLEMAIN

(AFTERWARDS DUCHESS OF CLEVELAND,)

UPON HER ENCOURAGING HIS FIRST PLAY, CALLED 'THE WILD GALLANT.'

As seamen, shipwreck'd on some happy shore,
Discover wealth in lands unknown before;
And, what their art had labour'd long in vain,
By their misfortunes happily obtain:

So my much-envied muse, by storms long toss'd,
Is thrown upon your hospitable coast,
And finds more favour by her ill success,
Than she could hope for by her happiness.
Once Cato's virtue did the gods oppose;
While they the victor, he the vanquish'd chose:
But you have done what Cato could not do,
To choose the vanquish'd, and restore him too.
Let others still triumph, and gain their cause
By their deserts, or by the world's applause;
Let merit crowns, and justice laurels give,
But let me happy by your pity live.
True poets empty fame and praise despise,
Fame is the trumpet, but your smile the prize.
You sit above, and see vain men below
Contend for what you only can bestow:
But those great actions others do by chance,
Are, like your beauty, your inheritance:
So great a soul, such sweetness join'd in one,
Could only spring from noble Grandison.
You, like the stars, not by reflection bright,
Are born to your own heaven, and your own light;
Like them are good, but from a nobler cause,
From your own knowledge, not from nature's laws.
Your power you never use, but for defence,
To guard your own, or others' innocence:
Your foes are such, as they, not you, have made,
And virtue may repel, though not invade.
Such courage did the ancient heroes show,
Who, when they might prevent, would wait the blow:
With such assurance as they meant to say,
We will o'ercome, but scorn the safest way.
What further fear of danger can there be?
Beauty, which captives all things, sets me free.
Posterity will judge by my success,
I had the Grecian poet's happiness,
Who, waiving plots, found out a better way;
Some God descended, and preserved the play.
When first the triumphs of your sex were sung
By those old poets, beauty was but young,
And few admired the native red and white,
Till poets dress'd them up to charm the sight;
So beauty took on trust, and did engage
For sums of praises till she came to age.

But this long-growing debt to poetry
You justly, madam, have discharged to me,
When your applause and favour did infuse
New life to my condemn'd and dying muse.

TO MR. LEE,

ON HIS TRAGEDY OF 'ALEXANDER THE GREAT.'

THE blast of common censure could I fear,
Before your play my name should not appear;
For 'twill be thought, and with some colour too,
I pay the bribe I first received from you;
That mutual vouchers for our fame we stand,
And play the game into each other's hand;
And as cheap pen'orths to ourselves afford,
As Bessus and the brothers of the sword.
Such libels private men may well endure,
When states and kings themselves are not secure:
For ill men, conscious of their inward guilt,
Think the best actions on by-ends are built.
And yet my silence had not 'scaped their spite;
Then, envy had not suffer'd me to write;
For, since I could not ignorance pretend,
Such merit I must envy or commend.
So many candidates there stand for wit,
A place at court is scarce so hard to get:
In vain they crowd each other at the door;
For e'en reversions are all begg'd before:
Desert, how known soe'er, is long delay'd;
And then too fools and knaves are better paid.
Yet, as some actions bear so great a name,
That courts themselves are just, for fear of shame;
So has the mighty merit of your play
Extorted praise, and forced itself away.
'Tis here as 'tis at sea; who farthest goes,
Or dares the most, makes all the rest his foes.
Yet when some virtue much outgrows the rest,
It shoots too fast, and high, to be express'd;
As his heroic worth struck envy dumb,
Who took the Dutchman, and who cut the boom.

Such praise is your's, while you the passions move,
That 'tis no longer feign'd, 'tis real love,
Where nature triumphs over wretched art;
We only warm the head, but you the heart.
Always you warm; and if the rising year,
As in hot regions, brings the sun too near,
'Tis but to make your fragrant spices blow,
Which in our cooler climates will not grow.
They only think you animate your theme
With too much fire, who are themselves all phlegm.
Prizes would be for lags of slowest pace,
Were cripples made the judges of the race.
Despise those drones, who praise, while they accuse
The too much vigour of your youthful muse.
That humble style which they your virtue make,
Is in your power; you need but stoop and take.
Your beauteous images must be allow'd
By all, but some vile poets of the crowd.
But how should any sign-post dauber know
The worth of Titian or of Angelo?
Hard features every bungler can command;
To draw true beauty shows a master's hand.

TO THE EARL OF ROSCOMMON,

ON HIS ESSAY ON TRANSLATED VERSE.

WHETHER the fruitful Nile, or Tyrian shore,
The seeds of arts and infant science bore,
'Tis sure the noble plant, translated first,
Advanced its head in Grecian gardens nursed.
The Grecians added verse: their tuneful tongue
Made nature first, and nature's God their song.
Nor stopp'd translation here: for conqu'ring Rome,
With Grecian spoils, brought Grecian numbers home;
Enrich'd by those Athenian muses more,
Than all the vanquish'd world could yield before.
'Till barbarous nations, and more barbarous times,
Debased the majesty of verse to rhymes;
Those rude at first, a kind of hobbling prose,
That limp'd along, and tinkled in the close.
But Italy, reviving from the trance
Of Vandal, Goth, and Monkish ignorance,

With pauses, cadence, and well-vowel'd words,
And all the graces a good ear affords,
Made rhyme an art, and Dante's polish'd page
Restored a silver, not a golden age.
Then Petrarch follow'd, and in him we see,
What rhyme improved in all its height can be:
At best a pleasing sound, and fair barbarity.
The French pursued their steps; and Britain, last,
In manly sweetness all the rest surpass'd.
The wit of Greece, the gravity of Rome,
Appear exalted in the British loom:
The Muse's empire is restored again,
In Charles his reign, and by Roscommon's pen.
Yet modestly he does his work survey,
And calls a finish'd Poem an Essay;
For all the needful rules are scatter'd here;
Truth smoothly told, and pleasantly severe;
So well is art disguised, for nature to appear.
Nor need those rules to give translation light:
His own example is a flame so bright,
That he who but arrives to copy well,
Unguided will advance, unknowing will excel.
Scarce his own Horace could such rules ordain,
Or his own Virgil sing a nobler strain.
How much in him may rising Ireland boast,
How much in gaining him has Britain lost!
Their island in revenge has ours reclaim'd;
The more instructed we, the more we still are shamed.
'Tis well for us his generous blood did flow,
Derived from British channels long ago,
That here his conqu'ring ancestors were nursed;
And Ireland but translated England first:
By this reprisal we regain our right,
Else must the two contending nations fight;
A nobler quarrel for his native earth,
Than what divided Greece for Homer's birth.
To what perfection will our tongue arrive,
How will invention and translation thrive,
When authors nobly born will bear their part,
And not disdain the inglorious praise of art!
Great generals thus, descending from command,
With their own toil provoke the soldier's hand.
How will sweet Ovid's ghost be pleased to hear
His fame augmented by an English peer;

How he embellishes his Helen's loves,
Outdoes his softness, and his sense improves?
When these translate, and teach translators too,
Nor firstling kid, nor any vulgar vow,
Should at Apollo's grateful altar stand:
Roscommon writes; to that auspicious hand,
Muse, feed the bull that spurns the yellow sand.
Roscommon, whom both court and camps commend,
True to his prince, and faithful to his friend;
Roscommon, first in fields of honour known,
First in the peaceful triumphs of the gown,
Who both Minervas justly makes his own.
Now let the few beloved by Jove, and they
Whom infused Titan form'd of better clay,
On equal terms with ancient wit engage,
Nor mighty Homer fear, nor sacred Virgil's page:
Our English palace opens wide in state;
And without stooping they may pass the gate.

TO THE DUCHESS OF YORK,

ON HER RETURN FROM SCOTLAND IN THE YEAR 1682.

When factious rage to cruel exile drove
The queen of beauty, and the court of love,
The Muses droop'd, with their forsaken arts,
And the sad Cupids broke their useless darts:
Our fruitful plains to wilds and deserts turn'd,
Like Eden's face, when banish'd man it mourn'd.
Love was no more, when loyalty was gone,
The great supporter of his awful throne.
Love could no longer after beauty stay,
But wander'd northward to the verge of day,
As if the sun and he had lost their way.
But now the illustrious nymph, return'd again,
Brings every grace triumphant in her train.
The wond'ring Nereids, though they raised no storm,
Foreslow'd her passage, to behold her form:
Some cried, 'A Venus;' some, 'A Thetis pass'd;'
But this was not so fair, nor that so chaste.
Far from her sight flew Faction, Strife, and Pride;
And Envy did but look on her, and died.

Whate'er we suffer'd from our sullen fate,
Her sight is purchased at an easy rate.
Three gloomy years against this day were set;
But this one mighty sum has clear'd the debt:
Like Joseph's dream, but with a better doom,
The famine past, the plenty still to come.
For her the weeping heavens become serene;
For her the ground is clad in cheerful green:
For her the nightingales are taught to sing,
And Nature has for her delay'd the spring.
The Muse resumes her long-forgotten lays,
And Love restored his ancient realm surveys,
Recals our beauties, and revives our plays;
His waste dominions peoples once again,
And from her presence dates his second reign.
But awful charms on her fair forehead sit,
Dispensing what she never will admit:
Pleasing, yet cold, like Cynthia's silver beam,
The people's wonder, and the poet's theme.
Distemper'd Zeal—Sedition—canker'd Hate—
No more shall vex the church, and tear the state:
No more shall Faction civil discords move,
Or only discords of too tender love:
Discord, like that of music's various parts;
Discord, that makes the harmony of hearts;
Discord, that only this dispute shall bring,
Who best shall love the duke, and serve the king.

A LETTER TO SIR GEORGE ETHEREGE.

To you who live in chill degree,
As map informs, of fifty-three,
And do not much for cold atone,
By bringing thither fifty-one,
Methinks all climes should be alike,
From tropic e'en to pole arctic;
Since you have such a constitution
As no where suffers diminution.
You can be old in grave debate,
And young in love-affairs of state;
And both to wives and husbands show
The vigour of a plenipo.

Like mighty missioner you come
"Ad Partes Infidelium."
A work of wondrous merit sure,
So far to go, so much t' endure;
And all to preach to German dame,
Where sound of Cupid never came.
Less had you done, had you been sent,
As far as Drake or Pinto went,
For cloves or nutmegs to the Line-a,
Or e'en for oranges to China.
That had indeed been charity;
Where love-sick ladies helpless lie,
Chapp'd, and for want of liquor dry.
But you have made your zeal appear
Within the circle of the Bear.
What region of the earth 's so dull,
That is not of your labours full?
Triptolemus (so sung the Nine)
Strew'd plenty from his cart divine.
But 'spite of all these fable-makers,
He never sow'd on Almain acres:
No, that was left by fate's decree,
To be perform'd and sung by thee.
Thou break'st through forms with as much ease
As the French king through articles.
In grand affairs thy days are spent,
In waging weighty compliment,
With such as monarchs represent.
They, whom such vast fatigues attend,
Want some soft minutes to unbend,
To show the world that now and then
Great ministers are mortal men.
Then Rhenish rummers walk the round;
In bumpers every king is crown'd;
Besides three holy mitred Hectors,
And the whole college of Electors.
No health of potentate is sunk,
That pays to make his envoy drunk.
These Dutch delights, I mention'd last,
Suit not, I know, your English taste:
For wine to leave a whore or play
Was ne'er your Excellency's way.
Nor need this title give offence,
For here you were—your Excellence,

For gaming, writing, speaking, keeping,
His Excellence for all but sleeping.
Now if you tope in form, and treat,
'Tis the sour sauce to the sweet meat,
The fine you pay for being great.
Nay, here 's a harder imposition,
Which is indeed the court's petition,
That setting worldly pomp aside,
Which poet has at font denied,
You would be pleased in humble way
To write a trifle call'd a Play.
This truly is a degradation,
But would oblige the crown and nation
Next to your wise negotiation.
If you pretend, as well you may,
Your high degree, your friends will say,
The duke St. Aignon made a play.
If Gallic wit convince you scarce,
His grace of Bucks has made a farce,
And you, whose comic wit is terse all,
Can hardly fall below Rehearsal.
Then finish what you have began;
But scribble faster if you can:
For yet no George, to our discerning,
Has writ without a ten years' warning.

TO MR. SOUTHERN,

ON HIS COMEDY CALLED, 'THE WIVES' EXCUSE.'

SURE there 's a fate in plays, and 'tis in vain
To write while these malignant planets reign.
Some very foolish influence rules the pit,
Not always kind to sense, or just to wit:
And whilst it lasts, let buffoon'ry succeed,
To make us laugh; for never was more need.
Farce, in itself, is of a nasty scent;
But the gain smells not of the excrement.
The Spanish nymph, a wit and beauty too,
With all her charms, bore but a single show:
But let a monster Muscovite appear,
He draws a crowded audience round the year.

May be thou hast not pleased the box and pit;
Yet those who blame thy tale applaud thy wit:
So Terence plotted, but so Terence writ.
Like his thy thoughts are true, thy language clean;
E'en lewdness is made moral in thy scene.
The hearers may for want of Nokes repine;
But rest secure, the readers will be thine.
Nor was thy labour'd drama damn'd or hiss'd,
But with a kind civility dismiss'd;
With such good manners, as the Wife did use,
Who, not accepting, did but just refuse.
There was a glance at parting; such a look,
As bids thee not give o'er, for one rebuke.
But if thou would'st be seen, as well as read,
Copy one living author, and one dead:
The standard of thy style let Etherege be;
For wit, the immortal spring of Wycherley:
Learn, after both, to draw some just design,
And the next age will learn to copy thine.

TO HENRY HIGDEN, Esq.

ON HIS TRANSLATION OF THE TENTH SATIRE OF JUVENAL.

The Grecian wits, who Satire first began,
Were pleasant Pasquins on the life of man;
At mighty villains, who the state oppress'd,
They durst not rail, perhaps; they lash'd, at least,
And turn'd them out of office with a jest.
No fool could peep abroad, but ready stand
The drolls to clap a bauble in his hand.
Wise legislators never yet could draw
A fop within the reach of common law;
For posture, dress, grimace, and affectation,
Though foes to sense, are harmless to the nation.
Our last redress is dint of verse to try,
And Satire is our court of Chancery.
This way took Horace to reform an age,
Not bad enough to need an author's rage.
But yours, who lived in more degenerate times,
Was forced to fasten deep, and worry crimes.
Yet you, my friend, have temper'd him so well,
You make him smile in spite of all his zeal:

An art peculiar to yourself alone,
To join the virtues of two styles in one.
Oh! were your author's principle received,
Half of the labouring world would be relieved:
For not to wish is not to be deceived.
Revenge would into charity be changed,
Because it costs too dear to be revenged:
It costs our quiet and content of mind,
And when 'tis compass'd leaves a sting behind.
Suppose I had the better end o' the staff,
Why should I help the ill-natured world to laugh?
'Tis all alike to them, who get the day;
They love the spite and mischief of the fray.
No; I have cured myself of that disease;
Nor will I be provoked, but when I please:
But let me half that cure to you restore;
You give the salve, I laid it to the sore.
Our kind relief against a rainy day,
Beyond a tavern, or a tedious play,
We take your book, and laugh our spleen away.
If all your tribe, too studious of debate,
Would cease false hopes and titles to create,
Led by the rare example you begun,
Clients would fail, and lawyers be undone.

TO MR. CONGREVE,

ON HIS COMEDY CALLED, 'THE DOUBLE DEALER.'

Well then, the promised hour is come at last,
The present age of wit obscures the past:
Strong were our sires, and as they fought they writ,
Conquering with force of arms, and dint of wit:
Theirs was the giant race, before the flood:
And thus, when Charles return'd, our empire stood.
Like Janus he the stubborn soil manured,
With rules of husbandry the rankness cured;
Tamed us to manners, when the stage was rude;
And boisterous English wit with art indued.
Our age was cultivated thus at length;
But what we gain'd in skill we lost in strength.
Our builders were with want of genius cursed;
The second temple was not like the first:

Till you, the best Vitruvius, come at length;
Our beauties equal, but excel our strength.
Firm Doric pillars found your solid base:
The fair Corinthian crowns the higher space:
Thus all below is strength, and all above is grace.
In easy dialogue is Fletcher's praise;
He moved the mind, but had not power to raise.
Great Jonson did by strength of judgment please;
Yet, doubling Fletcher's force, he wants his ease.
In differing talents both adorn'd their age;
One for the study, t'other for the stage.
But both to Congreve justly shall submit,
One match'd in judgment, both o'ermatch'd in wit.
In him all beauties of this age we see,
Etherege his courtship, Southern's purity,
The satire, wit, and strength of manly Wycherley.
All this in blooming youth you have achieved:
Nor are your foil'd contemporaries grieved.
So much the sweetness of your manners move,
We cannot envy you, because we love.
Fabius might joy in Scipio, when he saw
A beardless consul made against the law,
And join his suffrage to the votes of Rome;
Though he with Hannibal was overcome.
Thus old Romano bow'd to Raphael's fame,
And scholar to the youth he taught became.
Oh that your brows my laurel had sustain'd!
Well had I been deposed, if you had reign'd:
The father had descended for the son;
For only you are lineal to the throne.
Thus, when the state one Edward did depose,
A greater Edward in his room arose.
But now, not I, but poetry is cursed;
For Tom the second reigns like Tom the first.
But let them not mistake my patron's part,
Nor call his charity their own desert.
Yet this I prophesy; thou shalt be seen,
(Though with some short parenthesis between)
High on the throne of wit, and, seated there,
Not mine, that's little, but thy laurel wear.
Thy first attempt an early promise made;
That early promise this has more than paid.
So bold, yet so judiciously you dare,
That your least praise is to be regular.

Time, place, and action, may with pains be wrought;
But genius must be born, and never can be taught.
This is your portion; this your native store;
Heaven, that but once was prodigal before,
To Shakspeare gave as much; she could not give him more.
Maintain your post: that's all the fame you need;
For 'tis impossible you should proceed.
Already I am worn with cares and age,
And just abandoning the ungrateful stage:
Unprofitably kept at Heaven's expense,
I live a rent-charge on his providence:
But you, whom every muse and grace adorn,
Whom I foresee to better fortune born,
Be kind to my remains; and oh, defend,
Against your judgment, your departed friend!
Let not the insulting foe my fame pursue,
But shade those laurels which descend to you:
And take for tribute what these lines express:
You merit more; nor could my love do less.

TO MR. GRANVILLE,

(AFTERWARDS LORD LANSDOWNE,)

ON HIS TRAGEDY CALLED, 'HEROIC LOVE.'

Auspicious poet, wert thou not my friend,
How could I envy, what I must commend!
But since 'tis nature's law, in love and wit,
That youth should reign, and withering age submit,
With less regret those laurels I resign,
Which, dying on my brows, revive on thine.
With better grace an ancient chief may yield
The long-contended honours of the field,
Than venture all his fortune at a cast,
And fight, like Hannibal, to lose at last.
Young princes, obstinate to win the prize,
Though yearly beaten, yearly yet they rise:
Old monarchs, though successful, still in doubt,
Catch at a peace, and wisely turn devout.
Thine be the laurel then; thy blooming age
Can best, if any can, support the stage;
Which so declines, that shortly we may see
Players and plays reduced to second infancy.

Sharp to the world, but thoughtless of renown,
They plot not on the stage, but on the town,
And, in despair their empty pit to fill,
Set up some foreign monster in a bill.
Thus they jog on, still tricking, never thriving,
And murdering plays, which they miscal reviving.
Our sense is nonsense, through their pipes convey'd;
Scarce can a poet know the play he made;
'Tis so disguised in death; nor thinks 'tis he
That suffers in the mangled tragedy.
Thus Itys first was kill'd, and after dress'd
For his own sire, the chief invited guest.
I say not this of thy successful scenes,
Where thine was all the glory, theirs the gains.
With length of time, much judgment, and more toil,
Not ill they acted, what they could not spoil.
Their setting-sun still shoots a glimmering ray,
Like ancient Rome, majestic in decay:
And better gleanings their worn soil can boast,
Than the crab-vintage of the neighbouring coast.
This difference yet the judging world will see;
Thou copyest Homer, and they copy thee.

TO MR. MOTTEUX,

ON HIS TRAGEDY CALLED, 'BEAUTY IN DISTRESS.'

'Tis hard, my friend, to write in such an age,
As damns, not only poets, but the stage.
That sacred art, by Heaven itself infused,
Which Moses, David, Solomon have used,
Is now to be no more: the Muses' foes
Would sink their Maker's praises into prose.
Were they content to prune the lavish vine
Of straggling branches, and improve the wine,
Who, but a madman, would his thoughts defend?
All would submit; for all but fools will mend.
But when to common sense they give the lie,
And turn distorted words to blasphemy,
They give the scandal; and the wise discern,
Their glosses teach an age, too apt to learn.
What I have loosely, or profanely writ,
Let them to fires, their due desert, commit:

Nor, when accused by me, let them complain:
Their faults, and not their function, I arraign.
Rebellion, worse than witchcraft, they pursued;
The pulpit preach'd the crime, the people rued.
The stage was silenced; for the saints would see
In fields perform'd their plotted tragedy.
But let us first reform, and then so live,
That we may teach our teachers to forgive:
Our desk be placed below their lofty chairs;
Ours be the practice, as the precept theirs.
The moral part, at least, we may divide,
Humility reward, and punish pride;
Ambition, interest, avarice, accuse:
These are the province of a tragic muse.
These hast thou chosen; and the public voice
Has equall'd thy performance with thy choice.
Time, action, place, are so preserved by thee,
That e'en Cornëille might with envy see
The alliance of his Tripled Unity.
Thy incidents, perhaps, too thick are sown;
But too much plenty is thy fault alone.
At least but two can that good crime commit,
Thou in design, and Wycherley in wit.
Let thy own Gauls condemn thee, if they dare;
Contented to be thinly regular:
Born there, but not for them, our fruitful soil
With more increase rewards thy happy toil.
Their tongue, enfeebled, is refined too much;
And, like pure gold, it bends at every touch:
Our sturdy Teuton yet will art obey,
More fit for manly thought, and strengthen'd with allay.
But whence art thou inspired, and thou alone,
To flourish in an idiom not thy own?
It moves our wonder, that a foreign guest
Should over-match the most, and match the best.
In under-praising thy deserts, I wrong;
Here find the first deficience of our tongue:
Words, once my stock, are wanting, to commend
So great a poet, and so good a friend.

TO MY HONOURED KINSMAN,

JOHN DRYDEN,

OF CHESTERTON, IN THE COUNTY OF HUNTINGDON, ESQ.

How bless'd is he, who leads a country life,
Unvex'd with anxious cares, and void of strife!
Who studying peace, and shunning civil rage,
Enjoy'd his youth, and now enjoys his age:
All who deserve his love, he makes his own;
And, to be loved himself, needs only to be known.
Just, good and wise, contending neighbours come,
From your award to wait their final doom;
And, foes before, return in friendship home.
Without their cost, you terminate the cause;
And save the expense of long litigious laws:
Where suits are traversed; and so little won,
That he who conquers, is but last undone:
Such are not your decrees; but so design'd,
The sanction leaves a lasting peace behind:
Like your own soul, serene; a pattern of your mind.
Promoting concord, and composing strife,
Lord of yourself, uncumber'd with a wife;
Where, for a year, a month, perhaps a night,
Long penitence succeeds a short delight:
Minds are so hardly match'd, that ev'n the first,
Though pair'd by Heaven, in Paradise were cursed.
For man and woman, though in one they grow,
Yet, first or last, return again to two.
He to God's image, she to his was made;
So, farther from the fount, the stream at random stray'd.
How could he stand, when, put to double pain,
He must a weaker than himself sustain!
Each might have stood, perhaps; but each alone;
Two wrestlers help to pull each other down.
Not that my verse would blemish all the fair;
But yet if some be bad, 'tis wisdom to beware;
And better shun the bait, than struggle in the snare.
Thus have you shunn'd, and shun the married state,
Trusting as little as you can to fate.
No porter guards the passage of your door,
T' admit the wealthy, and exclude the poor;
For God, who gave the riches, gave the heart
To sanctify the whole, by giving part;

Heaven, who foresaw the will, the means has wrought,
And to the second son a blessing brought;
The first-begotten had his father's share:
But you, like Jacob, are Rebecca's heir.
So may your stores, and fruitful fields increase;
And ever be you bless'd, who live to bless.
As Ceres sow'd, where'er her chariot flew;
As Heaven in deserts rain'd the bread of dew;
So free to many, to relations most,
You feed with manna your own Israel host.
With crowds attended of your ancient race,
You seek the champain sports, or sylvan chace:
With well-breath'd bugles you surround the wood,
Ev'n then, industrious of the common good:
And often have you brought the wily fox
To suffer for the firstlings of the flocks;
Chased even amid the folds; and made to bleed,
Like felons, where they did the murderous deed.
This fiery game your active youth maintain'd,
Not yet by years extinguish'd, though restrain'd:
You season still with sports your serious hours:
For age but tastes of pleasures, youth devours.
The hare in pastures or in plains is found,
Emblem of human life, who runs the round;
And, after all his wandering ways are done,
His circle fills, and ends where he begun,
Just as the setting meets the rising sun.
Thus princes ease their cares; but happier he,
Who seeks not pleasure through necessity,
Than such as once on slippery thrones were placed;
And chasing, sigh to think themselves are chased.
So lived our sires, ere doctors learn'd to kill,
And multiplied with theirs the weekly bill.
The first physicians by debauch were made:
Excess began, and sloth sustains the trade,
Pity the generous kind their cares bestow
To search forbidden truths; (a sin to know:)
To which if human science could attain,
The doom of death, pronounced by God, were vain.
In vain the leech would interpose delay;
Fate fastens first, and vindicates the prey.
What help from art's endeavours can we have?
Gibbons but guesses, nor is sure to save:
But Maurus sweeps whole parishes, and peoples every grave

And no more mercy to mankind will use,
Than when he robb'd and murder'd Maro's muse
Would'st thou be soon despatch'd, and perish whole,
Trust Maurus with thy life, and Milbourn with thy soul.*
By chace our long-lived fathers earn'd their food;
Toil strung the nerves, and purified the blood:
But we their sons, a pamper'd race of men,
Are dwindled down to threescore years and ten.
Better to hunt in fields, for health unbought,
Than fee the doctor for a nauseous draught;
The wise, for cure, on exercise depend;
God never made his work, for man to mend.
The tree of knowledge, once in Eden placed,
Was easy found, but was forbid the taste:
Oh, had our grandsire walk'd without his wife,
He first had sought the better plant of life!
Now both are lost: yet, wandering in the dark,
Physicians, for the tree, have found the bark:
They, labouring for relief of human kind,
With sharpen'd sight some remedies may find;
The apothecary-train is wholly blind.
From files a random recipe they take,
And many deaths of one prescription make.
Garth, generous as his muse, prescribes and gives;
The shopman sells; and by destruction lives:
Ungrateful tribe! who, like the viper's brood,
From med'cine issuing, suck their mother's blood!
Let these obey; and let the learn'd prescribe;
That men may die, without a double bribe:
Let them, but under their superiors, kill;
When doctors first have sign'd the bloody bill;
He 'scapes the best, who, nature to repair,
Draws physic from the fields, in draughts of vital air.
You hoard not health, for your own private use;
But on the public spend the rich produce.
When, often urged, unwilling to be great,
Your country calls you from your loved retreat,
And sends to senates, charged with common care,
Which none more shuns: and none can better bear:
Where could they find another form'd so fit,
To poise, with solid sense, a sprightly wit?

* Dr. Gibbons was a physician at this time justly in high esteem. By Maurus is meant Sir Richard Blackmore, physician to King William, and author of many epic poems. Milbourn was a nonjuring minister.

Were these both wanting, as they both abound,
Where could so firm integrity be found?
Well born, and wealthy, wanting no support,
You steer betwixt the country and the court:
Nor gratify whate'er the great desire,
Nor grudging give what public needs require.
Part must be left, a fund when foes invade;
And part employ'd to roll the watery trade:
Ev'n Canaan's happy land, when worn with toil,
Required a sabbath-year to mend the meagre soil.
Good senators (and such as you) so give,
That kings may be supplied, the people thrive.
And he, when want requires, is truly wise,
Who slights not foreign aids, nor over-buys;
But on our native strength, in time of need, relies.
Munster was bought, we boast not the success;
Who fights for gain, for greater makes his peace.
Our foes, compell'd by need, have peace embraced:
The peace both parties want, is like to last:
Which if secure, securely we may trade;
Or, not secure, should never have been made.
Safe in ourselves, while on ourselves we stand,
The sea is ours, and that defends the land.
Be, then, the naval stores the nation's care,
New ships to build, and batter'd to repair.
Observe the war, in every annual course;
What has been done, was done with British force:
Namur subdued, is England's palm alone;
The rest besieged; but we constrain'd the town:
We saw the event that follow'd our success;
France, though pretending arms, pursued the peace;
Obliged, by one sole treaty, to restore
What twenty years of war had won before.
Enough for Europe has our Albion fought:
Let us enjoy the peace our blood has bought.
When once the Persian king was put to flight,
The weary Macedons refused to fight:
Themselves their own mortality confess'd;
And left the son of Jove to quarrel for the rest.
Ev'n victors are by victories undone;
Thus Hannibal, with foreign laurels won,
To Carthage was recall'd, too late to keep his own.
While sore of battle, while our wounds are green,
Why should we tempt the doubtful die again?

In wars renew'd, uncertain of success;
Sure of a share, as umpires of the peace.
A patriot both the king and country serves:
Prerogative, and privilege, preserves:
Of each our laws the certain limit show;
One must not ebb, nor t' other overflow:
Betwixt the prince and parliament we stand;
The barriers of the state on either hand:
May neither overflow, for then they drown the land.
When both are full, they feed our bless'd abode;
Like those that water'd once the paradise of God.
Some overpoise of sway, by turns, they share;
In peace the people, and the prince in war:
Consuls of moderate power in calms were made;
When the Gauls came, one sole dictator sway'd.
Patriots, in peace, assert the people's right;
With noble stubbornness resisting might:
No lawless mandates from the court receive,
Nor lend by force, but in a body give.
Such was your generous grandsire: free to grant
In parliaments, that weigh'd their prince's want:
But so tenacious of the common cause,
As not to lend the king against his laws.
And in a loathsome dungeon doom'd to lie,
In bonds retain'd his birthright liberty,
And shamed oppression, till it set him free.
O true descendant of a patriot line,
Who, while thou shar'st their lustre, lend'st them thine,
Vouchsafe this picture of thy soul to see;
'Tis so far good, as it resembles thee:
The beauties to the original I owe;
Which when I miss, my own defects I show:
Nor think the kindred muses thy disgrace:
A poet is not born in every race.
Two of a house few ages can afford;
One to perform, another to record.
Praiseworthy actions are by thee embraced;
And 'tis my praise, to make thy praises last.
For ev'n when death dissolves our human frame,
The soul returns to heaven from whence it came;
Earth keeps the body, verse preserves the fame.

TO SIR GODFREY KNELLER,

PRINCIPAL PAINTER TO HIS MAJESTY.

ONCE I beheld the fairest of her kind,
And still the sweet idea charms my mind:
True, she was dumb; for Nature gazed so long,
Pleased with her work, that she forgot her tongue;
But, smiling, said, 'She still shall gain the prize;
I only have transferr'd it to her eyes.'
Such are thy pictures, Kneller: such thy skill,
That Nature seems obedient to thy will:
Comes out, and meets thy pencil in the draught;
Lives there, and wants but words to speak her thought.
At least thy pictures look a voice; and we
Imagine sounds, deceived to that degree,
We think 'tis somewhat more than just to see.
Shadows are but privations of the light;
Yet, when we walk, they shoot before the sight;
With us approach, retire, arise, and fall;
Nothing themselves, and yet expressing all.
Such are thy pieces, imitating life
So near, they almost conquer in the strife;
And from their animated canvas came,
Demanding souls, and loosen'd from the frame.
Prometheus, were he here, would cast away
His Adam, and refuse a soul to clay;
And either would thy noble work inspire,
Or think it warm enough, without his fire.
But vulgar hands may vulgar likeness raise;
This is the least attendant on thy praise:
From hence the rudiments of art began;
A coal, or chalk, first imitated man:
Perhaps the shadow, taken on a wall,
Gave outlines to the rude original:
Ere canvas yet was strain'd, before the grace
Of blended colours found their use and place,
Or cypress tablets first received a face.
By slow degrees the god-like art advanced;
As man grew polish'd, picture was enhanced:
Greece added posture, shade, and perspective;
And then the mimic piece began to live.
Yet perspective was lame, no distance true,
But all came forward in one common view:

No point of light was known, no bounds of art;
When light was there, it knew not to depart,
But glaring on remoter objects play'd;
Not languish'd, and insensibly decay'd.
Rome raised not art, but barely kept alive,
And with old Greece unequally did strive:
Till Goths, and Vandals, a rude northern race,
Did all the matchless monuments deface.
Then all the Muses in one ruin lie,
And rhyme began to enervate poetry.
Thus, in a stupid military state,
The pen and pencil find an equal fate.
Flat faces, such as would disgrace a screen,
Such as in Bantam's embassy were seen,
Unraised, unrounded, were the rude delight
Of brutal nations, only born to fight.
Long time the sister Arts, in iron sleep,
A heavy sabbath did supinely keep:
At length, in Raffaele's age, at once they rise,
Stretch all their limbs, and open all their eyes.
Thence rose the Roman, and the Lombard line:
One colour'd best, and one did best design.
Raffaele's, like Homer's, was the nobler part,
But Titian's painting look'd like Virgil's art.
Thy genius gives thee both; where true design,
Postures unforced, and lively colours join.
Likeness is ever there; but still the best,
Like proper thoughts in lofty language dress'd:
Where light, to shades descending, plays, not strives,
Dies by degrees, and by degrees revives.
Of various parts a perfect whole is wrought:
Thy pictures think, and we divine their thought.
Shakspeare, thy gift, I place before my sight;
With awe, I ask his blessing ere I write;
With reverence look on his majestic face;
Proud to be less, but of his god-like race.
His soul inspires me, while thy praise I write,
And I, like Teucer, under Ajax fight:
Bids thee, through me, be bold; with dauntless breast
Contemn the bad, and emulate the best.
Like his, thy critics in the attempt are lost:
When most they rail, know then, they envy most.
In vain they snarl aloof; a noisy crowd,
Like women's anger, impotent and loud.

While they their barren industry deplore,
Pass on secure, and mind the goal before.
Old as she is, my Muse shall march behind,
Bear off the blast, and intercept the wind.
Our arts are sisters, though not twins in birth;
For hymns were sung in Eden's happy earth:
But oh, the painter Muse, though last in place,
Has seized the blessing first, like Jacob's race.
Apelles' art an Alexander found;
And Raffaele's did with Leo's gold abound;
But Homer was with barren laurel crown'd.
Thou hadst thy Charles a while, and so had I;
But pass we that unpleasing image by.
Rich in thyself, and of thyself divine;
All pilgrims come and offer at thy shrine.
A graceful truth thy pencil can command;
The fair themselves go mended from thy hand.
Likeness appears in every lineament;
But likeness in thy work is eloquent.
Though nature there her true resemblance bears,
A nobler beauty in thy piece appears.
So warm thy work, so glows the generous frame,
Flesh looks less living in the lovely dame.
Thou paint'st as we describe, improving still,
When on wild nature we engraft our skill;
But not creating beauties at our will.
  But poets are confined in narrower space,
To speak the language of their native place;
The painter widely stretches his command;
Thy pencil speaks the tongue of every land.
From hence, my friend, all climates are your own,
Nor can you forfeit, for you hold of none.
All nations all immunities will give
To make you theirs, where'er you please to live;
And not seven cities, but the world would strive.
  Sure some propitious planet then did smile,
When first you were conducted to this isle:
Our genius brought you here, to enlarge our fame;
For your good stars are every where the same.
Thy matchless hand, of every region free,
Adopts our climate, not our climate thee.
  Great Rome and Venice early did impart
To thee the examples of their wondrous art.

Those masters then, but seen, not understood,
With generous emulation fired thy blood:
For what in nature's dawn the child admired,
The youth endeavour'd, and the man acquired.
If yet thou hast not reach'd their high degree,
'Tis only wanting to this age, not thee.
Thy genius, bounded by the times, like mine,
Drudges on petty draughts, nor dare design
A more exalted work, and more divine.
For what a song, or senseless opera
Is to the living labour of a play;
Or what a play to Virgil's work would be,
Such is a single piece to history.
But we, who life bestow, ourselves must live;
Kings cannot reign, unless their subjects give;
And they, who pay the taxes, bear the rule:
Thus thou, sometimes, art forced to draw a fool;
But so his follies in thy posture sink,
The senseless idiot seems at last to think.
Good Heaven! that sots and knaves should be so vain,
To wish their vile resemblance may remain!
And stand recorded, at their own request,
To future days, a libel or a jest!
Else should we see your noble pencil trace
Our unities of action, time, and place:
A whole composed of parts, and those the best,
With every various character express'd:
Heroes at large, and at a nearer view;
Less, and at distance, an ignobler crew.
While all the figures in one action join,
As tending to complete the main design.
More cannot be by mortal art express'd;
But venerable age shall add the rest.
For Time shall with his ready pencil stand;
Retouch your figures with his ripening hand;
Mellow your colours, and imbrown the teint;
Add every grace, which Time alone can grant;
To future ages shall your fame convey,
And give more beauties than he takes away.

ELEGIES AND EPITAPHS.

TO THE MEMORY OF MR. OLDHAM.

OBIIT 1683.

FAREWELL, too little, and too lately known,
Whom I began to think, and call my own:
For sure our souls were near allied, and thine
Cast in the same poetic mould with mine.
One common note on either lyre did strike,
And knaves and fools we both abhorr'd alike.
To the same goal did both our studies drive;
The last set out, the soonest did arrive.
Thus Nisus fell upon the slippery place,
Whilst his young friend perform'd, and won the race.
Oh early ripe! to thy abundant store
What could advancing age have added more?
It might (what nature never gives the young)
Have taught the numbers of thy native tongue.
But satire needs not those, and wit will shine
Through the harsh cadence of a rugged line.
A noble error, and but seldom made,
When poets are by too much force betray'd.
Thy generous fruits, though gather'd ere their prime,
Still show'd a quickness; and maturing time
But mellows what we write, to the dull sweets of rhyme.
Once more, hail, and farewell; farewell, thou young,
But ah too short, Marcellus of our tongue!
Thy brows with ivy, and with laurels bound;
But fate and gloomy night encompass thee around.

AN ODE

TO THE PIOUS MEMORY OF THE ACCOMPLISHED YOUNG LADY,

MRS. ANNE KILLIGREW,

EXCELLENT IN THE TWO SISTER ARTS OF POESY AND PAINTING.

THOU youngest virgin-daughter of the skies,
Made in the last promotion of the bless'd;
Whose palms, new pluck'd from paradise,
In spreading branches more sublimely rise,

Rich with immortal green above the rest:
Whether, adopted to some neighb'ring star,
Thou roll'st above us, in thy wandering race,
Or, in procession fix'd and regular,
Mov'st with the heaven's majestic pace;
Or, call'd to more superior bliss,
Thou tread'st, with seraphims, the vast abyss:
Whatever happy region is thy place,
Cease thy celestial song a little space;
Thou wilt have time enough for hymns divine,
Since heaven's eternal year is thine.
Hear then a mortal Muse thy praise rehearse,
In no ignoble verse;
But such as thy own voice did practise here,
When thy first-fruits of Poesy were given;
To make thyself a welcome inmate there:
While yet a young probationer,
And candidate of heaven.

If by traduction came thy mind,
Our wonder is the less to find
A soul so charming from a stock so good;
Thy father was transfused into thy blood:
So wert thou born into a tuneful strain,
An early, rich, and inexhausted vein.
But if thy pre-existing soul
Was form'd at first, with myriads more,
It did through all the mighty poets roll,
Who Greek or Latin laurels wore,
And was that Sappho last, which once it was before.
If so, then cease thy flight, O heaven-born mind!
Thou hast no dross to purge from thy rich ore:
Nor can thy soul a fairer mansion find,
Than was the beauteous frame she left behind:
Return to fill or mend the choir of thy celestial kind.

May we presume to say, that, at thy birth,
New joy was sprung in heaven, as well as here on earth.
For sure the milder planets did combine
On thy auspicious horoscope to shine,
And e'en the most malicious were in trine.
Thy brother-angels at thy birth
Strung each his lyre, and tuned it high,
That all the people of the sky
Might know a poetess was born on earth.

And then, if ever, mortal ears
Had heard the music of the spheres.
And if no clustering swarm of bees
On thy sweet mouth distill'd their golden dew,
'Twas that such vulgar miracles
Heaven had not leisure to renew:
For all thy blest fraternity of love
Solemnized there thy birth, and kept thy holiday above.

O gracious God! how far have we
Profaned thy heavenly gift of poesy?
Made prostitute and profligate the Muse,
Debased to each obscene and impious use,
Whose harmony was first ordain'd above
For tongues of angels, and for hymns of love?
Oh wretched we! why were we hurried down
This lubrique and adulterate age,
(Nay, added fat pollutions of our own)
To increase the streaming ordures of the stage?
What can we say to excuse our second fall?
Let this thy vestal, Heaven, atone for all:
Her Arethusian stream remains unsoil'd,
Unmix'd with foreign filth, and undefiled;
Her wit was more than man, her innocence a child.

Art she had none, yet wanted none;
For Nature did that want supply:
So rich in treasures of her own,
She might our boasted stores defy:
Such noble vigour did her verse adorn,
That it seem'd borrow'd, where 'twas only born.
Her morals too were in her bosom bred,
By great examples daily fed,
What in the best of books, her father's life, she read.
And to be read herself she need not fear;
Each test, and every light, her muse will bear,
Though Epictetus with his lamp were there.
E'en love (for love sometimes her muse express'd)
Was but a lambent flame which play'd about her breast:
Light as the vapours of a morning dream,
So cold herself, whilst she such warmth express'd,
'Twas Cupid bathing in Diana's stream.

Born to the spacious empire of the Nine,
One would have thought, she should have been content
To manage well that mighty government;

But what can young ambitious souls confine?
To the next realm she stretch'd her sway,
For Painture near adjoining lay,
A plenteous province, and alluring prey.
A Chamber of Dependencies was framed,
(As conquerors will never want pretence,
When arm'd, to justify the offence)
And the whole fief, in right of poetry, she claim'd.
The country open lay without defence:
For poets frequent inroads there had made,
And perfectly could represent
The shape, the face, with every lineament,
And all the large domains which the Dumb Sister sway'd.
All bow'd beneath her government,
Received in triumph wheresoe'er she went.
Her pencil drew, whate'er her soul design'd,
And oft the happy draught surpass'd the image in her mind.
The sylvan scenes of herds and flocks,
And fruitful plains and barren rocks,
Of shallow brooks that flow'd so clear,
The bottom did the top appear;
Of deeper too and ampler floods,
Which, as in mirrors, show'd the woods;
Of lofty trees, with sacred shades,
And perspectives of pleasant glades,
Where nymphs of brightest form appear,
And shaggy satyrs standing near,
Which them at once admire and fear.
The ruins too of some majestic piece,
Boasting the power of ancient Rome, or Greece,
Whose statues, friezes, columns, broken lie,
And, though defaced, the wonder of the eye;
What nature, art, bold fiction, e'er durst frame,
Her forming hand gave feature to the name.
So strange a concourse ne'er was seen before,
But when the peopled ark the whole creation bore.

The scene then changed, with bold erected look
Our martial king the sight with reverence strook:
For not content to express his outward part,
Her hand call'd out the image of his heart:
His warlike mind, his soul devoid of fear,
His high-designing thoughts were figured there,
As when, by magic, ghosts are made appear.

Our phœnix-queen was pourtray'd, too, so bright,
Beauty alone could beauty take so right:
Her dress, her shape, her matchless grace,
Were all observed, as well as heavenly face.
With such a peerless majesty she stands,
As in that day she took the crown from sacred hands:
Before a train of heroines was seen,
In beauty foremost, as in rank, the queen.
Thus nothing to her genius was denied,
But like a ball of fire the further thrown,
Still with a greater blaze she shone,
And her bright soul broke out on every side.
What next she had design'd, Heaven only knows:
To such immoderate growth her conquest rose,
That fate alone its progress could oppose.

Now all those charms, that blooming grace,
The well-proportion'd shape, and beauteous face,
Shall never more be seen by mortal eyes;
In earth the much-lamented virgin lies.
Not wit, nor piety could fate prevent;
Nor was the cruel destiny content
To finish all the murder at a blow,
To sweep at once her life, and beauty too;
But, like a harden'd felon, took a pride
To work more mischievously slow,
And plunder'd first, and then destroy'd.
O double sacrilege on things divine,
To rob the relic, and deface the shrine!
But thus Orinda died:
Heaven, by the same disease, did both translate;
As equal were their souls, so equal was their fate.

Meantime her warlike brother on the seas
His waving streamers to the winds displays,
And vows for his return, with vain devotion, pays.
Ah, generous youth, that wish forbear,
The winds too soon will waft thee here!
Slack all thy sails, and fear to come,
Alas, thou know'st not, thou art wreck'd at home!
No more shalt thou behold thy sister's face,
Thou hast already had her last embrace.
But look aloft, and if thou kenn'st from far
Among the Pleiads a new-kindled star,

If any sparkles than the rest more bright;
'Tis she that shines in that propitious light.

When in mid-air the golden trump shall sound,
To raise the nations under ground:
When in the valley of Jehoshaphat,
The judging God shall close the book of fate;
And there the last assizes keep,
For those who wake, and those who sleep:
When rattling bones together fly,
From the four corners of the sky;
When sinews o'er the skeletons are spread,
Those clothed with flesh, and life inspires the dead;
The sacred poets first shall hear the sound,
And foremost from the tomb shall bound,
For they are cover'd with the lightest ground;
And straight, with in-born vigour, on the wing,
Like mounting larks, to the new morning sing.
There thou, sweet saint, before the quire shalt go,
As harbinger of heaven, the way to show,
The way which thou so well hast learn'd below.

UPON THE DEATH OF THE EARL OF DUNDEE.

Oh last and best of Scots! who didst maintain
Thy country's freedom from a foreign reign;
New people fill the land now thou art gone,
New gods the temples, and new kings the throne.
Scotland and thee did each in other live;
Nor would'st thou her, nor could she thee survive.
Farewell, who dying didst support the state,
And could'st not fall but with thy country's fate.

ELEONORA;

A PANEGYRICAL POEM,

DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF THE LATE COUNTESS OF ABINGDON.

TO THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF ABINGDON, &c.

MY LORD,

THE commands with which you honoured me some months ago, are now performed: they had been sooner; but betwixt ill health, some business, and many troubles, I was forced to defer them till this time. Ovid, going to his banishment, and writing from on shipboard to his friends, excused the faults of his poetry by his misfortunes; and told them, that good verses never flow, but from a serene and composed spirit. Wit, which is a kind of Mercury, with wings fastened to his head and heels, can fly but slowly in a damp air. I therefore chose rather to obey you late than ill: if at least I am capable of writing any thing, at any time, which is worthy your perusal and your patronage. I cannot say that I have escaped from a shipwreck; but have only gained a rock by hard swimming; where I may pant awhile and gather breath; for the doctors give me a sad assurance, that my disease never took its leave of any man, but with a purpose to return. However, my lord, I have laid hold on the interval, and managed the small stock, which age has left me, to the best advantage, in performing this inconsiderable service to my lady's memory. We, who are priests of Apollo, have not the inspiration when we please; but must wait till the god comes rushing on us, and invades us with a fury, which we are not able to resist: which gives us double strength while the fit continues, and leaves us languishing and spent, at its departure. Let me not seem to boast, my lord, for I have really felt it on this occasion, and prophesied beyond my natural power. Let me add, and hope to be believed, that the excellency of the subject contributed much to the happiness of the execution; and that the weight of thirty years was taken off me, while I was writing. I swam with the tide, and the water under me was buoyant. The reader will easily observe, that I was transported by the multitude and variety of my similitudes; which are generally the product of a luxuriant fancy, and the wantonness of wit. Had I called in my judgment to my assistance, I had certainly retrenched many of them. But I defend them not; let them pass for beautiful faults amongst the better sort of critics: for the whole poem, though written in that which they call Heroic verse, is of the Pindaric nature, as well in the thought as the

expression; and, as such, requires the same grains of allowance for it. It was intended, as your lordship sees in the title, not for an elegy, but a panegyric: a kind of apotheosis, indeed, if a heathen word may be applied to a Christian use. And on all occasions of praise, if we take the ancients for our patterns, we are bound by prescription to employ the magnificence of words, and the force of figures, to adorn the sublimity of thoughts. Isocrates amongst the Grecian orators, and Cicero, and the younger Pliny, amongst the Romans, have left us their precedents for our security: for I think I need not mention the inimitable Pindar, who stretches on these pinions out of sight, and is carried upward, as it were, into another world.

This, at least, my lord, I may justly plead, that, if I have not performed so well as I think I have, yet I have used my best endeavours to excel myself. One disadvantage I have had; which is, never to have known or seen my lady: and to draw the lineaments of her mind, from the description which I have received from others, is for a painter to set himself at work without the living original before him; which, the more beautiful it is, will be so much the more difficult for him to conceive, when he has only a relation given him of such and such features by an acquaintance or a friend, without the nice touches, which give the best resemblance, and make the graces of the picture. Every artist is apt enough to flatter himself (and I amongst the rest) that their own ocular observations would have discovered more perfections, at least others, than have been delivered to them: though I have received mine from the best hands, that is, from persons who neither want a just understanding of my lady's worth, nor a due veneration for her memory.

Doctor Donne, the greatest wit, though not the greatest poet of our nation, acknowledges, that he had never seen Mrs. Drury, whom he has made immortal in his admirable Anniversaries. I have had the same fortune, though I have not succeeded to the same genius. However, I have followed his footsteps in the design of his panegyric, which was to raise an emulation in the living, to copy out the example of the dead. And therefore it was, that I once intended to have called this poem, The Pattern: and though, on a second consideration, I changed the title into the name of the illustrious person, yet the design continues, and Eleonora is still the pattern of charity, devotion, and humility; of the best wife, the best mother, and the best of friends.

And now, my lord, though I have endeavoured to answer your commands, yet I could not answer it to the world, nor to my conscience, if I gave not your lordship my testimony of being the best husband now living: I say my testimony only; for the praise of it is given you by yourself. They who despise the rules of virtue both in their practice and their morals, will think this a very trivial commendation. But I think it the peculiar

happiness of the Countess of Abingdon, to have been so truly loved by you, while she was living, and so gratefully honoured, after she was dead. Few there are who have either had, or could have, such a loss; and yet fewer who carried their love and constancy beyond the grave. The exteriors of mourning, a decent funeral, and black habits, are the usual stints of common husbands: and perhaps their wives deserve no better than to be mourned with hypocrisy, and forgot with ease. But you have distinguished yourself from ordinary lovers, by a real and lasting grief for the deceased; and by endeavouring to raise for her the most durable monument, which is that of verse. And so it would have proved, if the workman had been equal to the work, and your choice of the artificer as happy as your design. Yet, as Phidias, when he had made the statue of Minerva, could not forbear to engrave his own name, as author of the piece: so give me leave to hope that, by subscribing mine to this poem, I may live by the goddess, and transmit my name to posterity by the memory of hers. 'Tis no flattery to assure your lordship, that she is remembered, in the present age, by all who have had the honour of her conversation and acquaintance; and that I have never been in any company since the news of her death was first brought me, where they have not extolled her virtues, and even spoken the same things of her in prose, which I have done in verse.

I therefore think myself obliged to thank your lordship for the commission which you have given me: how I have acquitted myself of it must be left to the opinion of the world, in spite of any protestation which I can enter against the present age, as incompetent or corrupt judges. For my comfort, they are but Englishmen, and, as such, if they think ill of me to-day, they are inconstant enough to think well of me to-morrow. And after all, I have not much to thank my fortune that I was born amongst them. The good of both sexes are so few, in England, that they stand like exceptions against general rules: and though one of them has deserved a greater commendation than I could give her, they have taken care that I should not tire my pen with frequent exercise on the like subjects; that praises, like taxes, should be appropriated, and left almost as individual as the person. They say, my talent is satire: if it be so, 'tis a fruitful age, and there is an extraordinary crop to gather. But a single hand is insufficient for such a harvest: they have sown the dragon's teeth themselves, and 'tis but just they should reap each other in lampoons. You, my lord, who have the character of honour, though 'tis not my happiness to know you, may stand aside, with the small remainders of the English nobility, truly such, and, unhurt yourselves, behold the mad combat. If I have pleased you, and some few others, I have obtained my end. You see I have disabled myself, like an elected Speaker of the

House: yet like him I have undertaken the charge, and find the burden sufficiently recompensed by the honour. Be pleased to accept of these my unworthy labours, this paper monument; and let her pious memory, which I am sure is sacred to you, not only plead the pardon of my many faults, but gain me your protection, which is ambitiously sought by,

My Lord,
Your Lordship's most obedient Servant,
JOHN DRYDEN.

ELEONORA.*

As when some great and gracious monarch dies,
Soft whispers first, and mournful murmurs rise
Among the sad attendants; then the sound
Soon gathers voice, and spreads the news around,
Through town and country, till the dreadful blast
Is blown to distant colonies at last;
Who, then, perhaps, were offering vows in vain,
For his long life, and for his happy reign:
So slowly, by degrees, unwilling fame
Did matchless Eleonora's fate proclaim,
Till public as the loss the news became.
The nation felt it in the extremest parts,
With eyes o'erflowing, and with bleeding hearts;
But most the poor, whom daily she supplied,
Beginning to be such but when she died.
For, while she lived, they slept in peace by night,
Secure of bread, as of returning light;
And with such firm dependence on the day,
That need grew pamper'd, and forgot to pray:
So sure the dole, so ready at their call,
They stood prepared to see the manna fall.
Such multitudes she fed, she clothed, she nursed,
That she herself might fear her wanting first.
Of her five talents, other five she made;
Heaven, that had largely given, was largely paid:

* It appears, from the dedication to the Earl of Abingdon, that this poem was written at his Lordship's own desire. The lady whom the poem affects to praise, was one of the coheiresses of Sir Henry Lee of Chicheley in Oxfordshire, and sister to the celebrated Mrs. Anne Wharton, a lady eminent for her poetical genius, whom Mr. Waller has celebrated in an elegant copy of verses. The Earl is said to have given Dryden 500 guineas for this poem.

And in few lives, in wondrous few, we find
A fortune better fitted to the mind.
Nor did her alms from ostentation fall,
Or proud desire of praise; the soul gave all:
Unbribed it gave; or, if a bribe appear,
No less than heaven; to heap huge treasures there.
Want pass'd for merit at her open door:
Heaven saw, he safely might increase his poor,
And trust their sustenance with her so well,
As not to be at charge of miracle.
None could be needy, whom she saw, or knew;
All in the compass of her sphere she drew:
He, who could touch her garment, was as sure,
As the first Christians of the apostles' cure.
The distant heard, by fame, her pious deeds,
And laid her up for their extremest needs;
A future cordial for a fainting mind;
For, what was ne'er refused, all hoped to find,
Each in his turn: the rich might freely come,
As to a friend; but to the poor, 'twas home.
As to some holy house the afflicted came,
The hunger-starved, the naked and the lame;
Want and diseases fled before her name.
For zeal like her's her servants were too slow;
She was the first, where need required, to go;
Herself the foundress and attendant too.
Sure she had guests sometimes to entertain,
Guests in disguise, of her great Master's train:
Her Lord himself might come, for aught we know;
Since in a servant's form he lived below:
Beneath her roof he might be pleased to stay;
Or some benighted angel, in his way,
Might ease his wings, and, seeing heaven appear
In its best work of mercy, think it there,
Where all the deeds of charity and love
Were in as constant method, as above,
All carried on; all of a piece with theirs;
As free her alms, as diligent her cares;
As loud her praises, and as warm her prayers.
Yet was she not profuse; but fear'd to waste,
And wisely managed, that the stock might last;
That all might be supplied, and she not grieve,
When crowds appear'd, she had not to relieve:

Which to prevent, she still increased her store;
Laid up, and spared, that she might give the more.
So Pharaoh, or some greater king than he,
Provided for the seventh necessity:
Taught from above his magazines to frame;
That famine was prevented ere it came.
Thus Heaven, though all-sufficient, shows a thrift
In his economy, and bounds his gift:
Creating, for our day, one single light;
And his reflection too supplies the night.
Perhaps a thousand other worlds, that lie
Remote from us, and latent in the sky,
Are lighten'd by his beams, and kindly nursed;
Of which our earthly dunghill is the worst.
Now, as all virtues keep the middle line,
Yet somewhat more to one extreme incline,
Such was her soul; abhorring avarice,
Bounteous, but almost bounteous to a vice:
Had she given more, it had profusion been,
And turn'd the excess of goodness into sin.
These virtues raised her fabric to the sky;
For that, which is next heaven, is charity.
But, as high turrets, for their airy steep,
Require foundations, in proportion deep;
And lofty cedars as far upward shoot,
As to the nether heavens they drive the root:
So low did her secure foundation lie,
She was not humble, but Humility.
Scarcely she knew that she was great, or fair,
Or wise, beyond what other women are,
Or, which is better, knew, but never durst compare.
For to be conscious of what all admire,
And not be vain, advances virtue higher.
But still she found, or rather thought she found,
Her own worth wanting, others' to abound;
Ascribed above their due to every one,
Unjust and scanty to herself alone.
Such her devotion was, as might give rules
Of speculation to disputing schools,
And teach us equally the scales to hold
Betwixt the two extremes of hot and cold;
That pious heat may mod'rately prevail,
And we be warm'd, but not be scorch'd with zeal.

Business might shorten, not disturb, her prayer;
Heaven had the best, if not the greater share.
An active life long orisons forbids;
Yet still she pray'd, for still she pray'd by deeds.
  Her every day was sabbath; only free
From hours of prayer, for hours of charity.
Such as the Jews from servile toil released;
Where works of mercy were a part of rest;
Such as blest angels exercise above,
Varied with sacred hymns and acts of love:
Such sabbaths as that one she now enjoys,
E'en that perpetual one, which she employs,
(For such vicissitudes in heaven there are)
In praise alternate, and alternate prayer.
All this she practised here; that when she sprung
Amidst the choirs, at the first sight she sung:
Sung, and was sung herself in angels' lays;
For, praising her, they did her Maker praise.
All offices of heaven so well she knew,
Before she came, that nothing there was new:
And she was so familiarly received,
As one returning, not as one arrived.
  Muse, down again precipitate thy flight:
For how can mortal eyes sustain immortal light?
But as the sun in water we can bear,
Yet not the sun, but his reflection there,
So let us view her, here, in what she was,
And take her image in this watery glass:
Yet look not every lineament to see;
Some will be cast in shades, and some will be
So lamely drawn, you'll scarcely know 'tis she.
For where such various virtues we recite,
'Tis like the milky-way, all over bright,
But sown so thick with stars, 'tis undistinguish'd light.
  Her virtue, not her virtues, let us call;
For one heroic comprehends them all:
One, as a constellation is but one,
Though 'tis a train of stars, that, rolling on,
Rise in their turn, and in the zodiac run:
Ever in motion; now 'tis Faith ascends,
Now Hope, now Charity, that upward tends,
And downwards with diffusive good descends.
  As in perfumes composed with art and cost,
'Tis hard to say what scent is uppermost;

Nor this part musk or civet can we call,
Or amber, but a rich result of all;
So she was all a sweet, whose every part,
In due proportion mix'd, proclaim'd the Maker's art.
No single virtue we could most commend,
Whether the wife, the mother, or the friend;
For she was all, in that supreme degree,
That as no one prevail'd, so all was she.
The several parts lay hidden in the piece;
The occasion but exerted that, or this.
A wife as tender, and as true withal,
As the first woman was before her fall:
Made for the man, of whom she was a part;
Made to attract his eyes, and keep his heart.
A second Eve, but by no crime accursed;
As beauteous, not as brittle as the first.
Had she been first, still Paradise had been,
And death had found no entrance by her sin.
So she not only had preserved from ill
Her sex and ours, but lived their pattern still.
Love and obedience to her lord she bore;
She much obey'd him, but she loved him more:
Not awed to duty by superior sway,
But taught by his indulgence to obey.
Thus we love God, as author of our good;
So subjects love just kings, or so they shou'd.
Nor was it with ingratitude return'd;
In equal fires the blissful couple burn'd;
One joy possess'd them both, and in one grief they mourn'd.
His passion still improved; he loved so fast,
As if he fear'd each day would be her last.
Too true a prophet to foresee the fate
That should so soon divide their happy state:
When he to heaven entirely must restore
That love, that heart, where he went halves before.
Yet as the soul is all in every part,
So God and he might each have all her heart.
So had her children too; for Charity
Was not more fruitful, or more kind than she:
Each under other by degrees they grew;
A goodly perspective of distant view.
Anchises look'd not with so pleased a face,
In numbering o'er his future Roman race,

And marshalling the heroes of his name,
As, in their order, next to light they came.
Nor Cybele, with half so kind an eye,
Survey'd her sons and daughters of the sky;
Proud, shall I say, of her immortal fruit?
As far as pride with heavenly minds may suit.
Her pious love excell'd to all she bore;
New objects only multiplied it more.
And as the chosen found the pearly grain
As much as every vessel could contain;
As in the blissful vision each shall share
As much of glory as his soul can bear;
So did she love, and so dispense her care.
Her eldest thus, by consequence, was best,
As longer cultivated than the rest.
The babe had all that infant care beguiles,
And early knew his mother in her smiles;
But when dilated organs let in day
To the young soul, and gave it room to play,
At his first aptness, the maternal love
Those rudiments of reason did improve:
The tender age was pliant to command;
Like wax it yielded to the forming hand:
True to the artificer, the labour'd mind
With ease was pious, generous, just, and kind:
Soft for impression, from the first prepared,
'Till virtue with long exercise grew hard:
With every act confirm'd, and made at last
So durable as not to be effaced,
It turn'd to habit; and, from vices free,
Goodness resolved into necessity.
Thus fix'd she virtue's image, that 's her own,
'Till the whole mother in the children shone;
For that was their perfection: she was such,
They never could express her mind too much.
So unexhausted her perfections were,
That, for more children, she had more to spare;
For souls unborn, whom her untimely death
Deprived of bodies, and of mortal breath;
And (could they take the impressions of her mind)
Enough still left to sanctify her kind.
Then wonder not to see this soul extend
The bounds, and seek some other self, a friend:

As swelling seas to gentle rivers glide,
To seek repose, and empty out the tide;
So this full soul, in narrow limits pent,
Unable to contain her, sought a vent,
To issue out, and in some friendly breast
Discharge her treasures, and securely rest:
To unbosom all the secrets of her heart,
Take good advice, but better to impart.
For 'tis the bliss of friendship's holy state,
To mix their minds, and to communicate;
Though bodies cannot, souls can penetrate:
Fix'd to her choice, inviolably true,
And wisely choosing, for she chose but few.
Some she must have; but in no one could find
A tally fitted for so large a mind.
The souls of friends like kings in progress are;
Still in their own, though from the palace far:
Thus her friend's heart her country dwelling was,
A sweet retirement to a coarser place;
Where pomp and ceremonies enter'd not,
Where greatness was shut out, and business well forgot.
This is the imperfect draught; but short as far
As the true height and bigness of a star
Exceeds the measures of the astronomer.
She shines above, we know; but in what place,
How near the throne, and Heaven's imperial face,
By our weak optics is but vainly guess'd;
Distance and altitude conceal the rest.
Though all these rare endowments of the mind
Were in a narrow space of life confined,
The figure was with full perfection crown'd;
Though not so large an orb, as truly round.
As when in glory, through the public place,
The spoils of conquer'd nations were to pass,
And but one day for triumph was allow'd,
The consul was constrain'd his pomp to crowd;
And so the swift procession hurried on,
That all, though not distinctly, might be shown:
So in the straiten'd bounds of life confined
She gave but glimpses of her glorious mind:
And multitudes of virtues pass'd along;
Each pressing foremost in the mighty throng,
Ambitious to be seen, and then make room
For greater multitudes that were to come.

Yet unemploy'd no minute slipp'd away ;
Moments were precious in so short a stay.
The haste of Heaven to have her was so great,
That some were single acts, though each complete ;
But every act stood ready to repeat.
Her fellow-saints with busy care will look
For her blest name in fate's eternal book ;
And, pleased to be outdone, with joy will see
Numberless virtues, endless charity :
But more will wonder at so short an age,
To find a blank beyond the thirtieth page :
And with a pious fear begin to doubt
The piece imperfect, and the rest torn out.
But 'twas her Saviour's time ; and, could there be
A copy near the original, 'twas she.
As precious gums are not for lasting fire,
They but perfume the temple, and expire :
So was she soon exhaled, and vanish'd hence ;
A short sweet odour, of a vast expense.
She vanish'd, we can scarcely say she died ;
For but a now did heaven and earth divide :
She pass'd serenely with a single breath ;
This moment perfect health, the next was death :
One sigh did her eternal bliss assure ;
So little penance needs, when souls are almost pure.
As gentle dreams our waking thoughts pursue ;
Or, one dream pass'd, we slide into a new ;
So close they follow, such wild order keep,
We think ourselves awake, and are asleep :
So softly death succeeded life in her :
She did but dream of heaven, and she was there.
No pains she suffer'd, nor expired with noise ;
Her soul was whisper'd out with God's still voice ;
As an old friend is beckon'd to a feast,
And treated like a long-familiar guest.
He took her as he found, but found her so,
As one in hourly readiness to go :
E'en on that day, in all her trim prepared ;
As early notice she from heaven had heard,
And some descending courier from above
Had given her timely warning to remove ;
Or counsell'd her to dress the nuptial room,
For on that night the bridegroom was to come.

He kept his hour, and found her where she lay
Clothed all in white, the livery of the day:
Scarce had she sinn'd in thought, or word, or act;
Unless omissions were to pass for fact:
That hardly death a consequence could draw,
To make her liable to nature's law.
And, that she died, we only have to show
The mortal part of her she left below:
The rest, so smooth, so suddenly she went,
Look'd like translation through the firmament,
Or, like the fiery car on the third errand sent.
O happy soul! if thou canst view from high,
Where thou art all intelligence, all eye,
If looking up to God, or down to us,
Thou find'st that any way be pervious,
Survey the ruins of thy house, and see
Thy widow'd, and thy orphan family:
Look on thy tender pledges left behind;
And, if thou canst a vacant minute find
From heavenly joys, that interval afford
To thy sad children, and thy mourning lord.
See how they grieve, mistaken in their love,
And shed a beam of comfort from above;
Give them, as much as mortal eyes can bear,
A transient view of thy full glories there;
That they with moderate sorrow may sustain
And mollify their losses in thy gain.
Or else divide the grief; for such thou wert,
That should not all relations bear a part,
It were enough to break a single heart..
Let this suffice: nor thou, great saint, refuse
This humble tribute of no vulgar muse:
Who, not by cares, or wants, or age depress'd,
Stems a wild deluge with a dauntless breast;
And dares to sing thy praises in a clime
Where vice triumphs, and virtue is a crime;
Where e'en to draw the picture of thy mind,
Is satire on the most of human kind:
Take it, while yet 'tis praise; before my rage,
Unsafely just, break loose on this bad age;
So bad, that thou thyself hadst no defence
From vice, but barely by departing hence.
Be what, and where thou art: to wish thy place,
Were, in the best, presumption more than grace.

Thy relics (such thy works of mercy are)
Have, in this poem, been my holy care.
As earth thy body keeps, thy soul the sky,
So shall this verse preserve thy memory;
For thou shalt make it live, because it sings of thee.

ON THE DEATH OF AMYNTAS.

A PASTORAL ELEGY.

'Twas on a joyless and a gloomy morn,
Wet was the grass, and hung with pearls the thorn;
When Damon, who design'd to pass the day
With hounds and horns, and chase the flying prey,
Rose early from his bed; but soon he found
The welkin pitch'd with sullen clouds around,
An eastern wind, and dew upon the ground.
Thus while he stood, and sighing did survey
The fields, and cursed the ill omens of the day,
He saw Menalcas come with heavy pace;
Wet were his eyes, and cheerless was his face:
He wrung his hands, distracted with his care,
And sent his voice before him from afar.
"Return (he cried), return, unhappy swain,
The spongy clouds are fill'd with gathering rain:
The promise of the day not only cross'd,
But e'en the spring, the spring itself is lost.
Amyntas—oh!"—he could not speak the rest,
Nor needed, for presaging Damon guess'd.
Equal with Heaven young Damon loved the boy,
The boast of Nature, both his parents' joy.
His graceful form revolving in his mind;
So great a genius, and a soul so kind,
Gave sad assurance that his fears were true;
Too well the envy of the gods he knew:
For when their gifts too lavishly are placed,
Soon they repent, and will not make them last.
For sure it was too bountiful a dole,
The mother's features, and the father's soul.
Then thus he cried: "The morn bespoke the news:
The morning did her cheerful light diffuse:
But see how suddenly she changed her face

And brought on clouds and rain, the day's disgrace;
Just such, Amyntas, was thy promised race.
What charms adorn'd thy youth, where Nature smiled,
And more than man was given us in a child!
His infancy was ripe: a soul sublime
In years so tender that prevented time:
Heaven gave him all at once; then snatch'd away,
Ere mortals all his beauties could survey:
Just like the flower that buds and withers in a day."

MENALCAS.

The mother, lovely, though with grief oppress'd,
Reclined his dying head upon her breast.
The mournful family stood all around;
One groan was heard, one universal sound;
All were in floods of tears and endless sorrow drown'd.
So dire a sadness sat on every look,
E'en Death repented he had given the stroke.
He grieved his fatal work had been ordained,
But promised length of life to those who yet remained.
The mother's and her eldest daughter's grace,
It seems, had bribed him to prolong their space.
The father bore it with undaunted soul,
Like one who durst his destiny control:
Yet with becoming grief he bore his part,
Resign'd his son, but not resign'd his heart.
Patient as Job; and may he live to see,
Like him, a new increasing family!

DAMON.

Such is my wish, and such my prophecy,
For yet, my friend, the beauteous mould remains;
Long may she exercise her fruitful pains!
But, ah! with better hap, and bring a race
More lasting, and endued with equal grace!
Equal she may, but farther none can go:
For he was all that was exact below.

MENALCAS.

Damon, behold yon breaking purple cloud;
Hear'st thou not hymns and songs divinely loud?
There mounts Amyntas; the young cherubs play
About their god-like mate, and sing him on his way.
He cleaves the liquid air, behold, he flies,
And every moment gains upon the skies.

The new-come guest admires the ethereal state,
The sapphire portal, and the golden gate;
And now admitted in the shining throng,
He shows the passport which he brought along.
His passport is his innocence and grace,
Well known to all the natives of the place.
Now sing, ye joyful angels, and admire
Your brother's voice that comes to mend your choir:
Sing you, while endless tears our eyes bestow;
For like Amyntas none is left below.

ON THE DEATH OF A VERY YOUNG GENTLEMAN.

He who could view the book of destiny,
And read whatever there was writ of thee,
O charming youth, in the first opening page,
So many graces in so green an age,
Such wit, such modesty, such strength of mind,
A soul at once so manly, and so kind;
Would wonder, when he turn'd the volume o'er,
And after some few leaves should find no more,
Nought but a blank remain, a dead void space,
A step of life that promised such a race.
We must not, dare not think, that Heaven began
A child, and could not finish him a man;
Reflecting what a mighty store was laid
Of rich materials, and a model made:
The cost already furnish'd; so bestow'd,
As more was never to one soul allow'd:
Yet after this profusion spent in vain,
Nothing but mouldering ashes to remain;
I guess not, lest I split upon the shelf,
Yet durst I guess, Heaven kept it for himself;
And giving us the use, did soon recal,
Ere we could spare, the mighty principal.
Thus then he disappear'd, was rarified;
For 'tis improper speech to say he died:
He was exhaled; his great Creator drew
His spirit, as the sun the morning dew.
'Tis sin produces death; and he had none,
But the taint Adam left on every son.

He added not, he was so pure, so good,
'Twas but the original forfeit of his blood:
And that so little, that the river ran
More clear than the corrupted fount began.
Nothing remain'd of the first muddy clay;
The length of course had wash'd it in the way:
So deep, and yet so clear, we might behold
The gravel bottom, and that bottom gold.
As such we loved, admired, almost adored,
Gave all the tribute mortals could afford.
Perhaps we gave so much, the powers above
Grew angry at our superstitious love:
For when we more than human homage pay,
The charming cause is justly snatch'd away.
Thus was the crime not his, but ours alone:
And yet we murmur that he went so soon;
Though miracles are short and rarely shown.
Hear then, ye mournful parents, and divide
That love in many, which in one was tied.
That individual blessing is no more,
But multiplied in your remaining store.
The flame 's dispersed, but does not all expire;
The sparkles blaze, though not the globe of fire.
Love him by parts, in all your numerous race,
And from those parts form one collected grace;
Then, when you have refined to that degree,
Imagine all in one, and think that one is he.

UPON YOUNG MASTER ROGERS.

Of gentle blood, his parents' only treasure,
Their lasting sorrow, and their vanish'd pleasure,
Adorn'd with features, virtues, wit, and grace,
A large provision for so short a race;
More moderate gifts might have prolong'd his date,
Too early fitted for a better state;
But, knowing heaven his home, to shun delay,
He leap'd o'er age, and took the shortest way.

ON THE DEATH OF MR. PURCELL.

(SET TO MUSIC BY DR. BLOW.)

MARK how the lark and linnet sing;
With rival notes
They strain their warbling throats,
To welcome in the spring.
But in the close of night,
When Philomel begins her heavenly lay,
They cease their mutual spite,
Drink in her music with delight,
And, list'ning, silently obey.

So ceased the rival crew, when Purcell came;
They sung no more, or only sung his fame:
Struck dumb, they all admired the god-like man:
The god-like man,
Alas! too soon retired,
As he too late began.
We beg not hell our Orpheus to restore:
Had he been there,
Their sovereign's fear
Had sent him back before.
The power of harmony too well they knew:
He long ere this had tuned their jarring sphere,
And left no hell below.

The heavenly choir, who heard his notes from high,
Let down the scale of music from the sky:
They handed him along,
And all the way he taught, and all the way they sung.
Ye brethren of the lyre, and tuneful voice,
Lament his lot; but at your own rejoice:
Now live secure, and linger out your days;
The gods are pleased alone with Purcell's lays,
Nor know to mend their choice.

ON THE LADY WHITMORE.

FAIR, kind, and true; a treasure each alone,
A wife, a mistress, and a friend in one,
Rest in this tomb, raised at thy husband's cost,
Here sadly summing, what he had, and lost.

Come, virgins, ere in equal bands ye join,
Come first, and offer at her sacred shrine;
Pray but for half the virtues of this wife,
Compound for all the rest, with longer life;
And wish your vows, like hers, may be return'd,
So loved when living, and when dead so mourn'd.

ON SIR PALMES FAIRBONE'S TOMB

IN WESTMINSTER-ABBEY.

Ye sacred relics, which your marble keep,
Here, undisturb'd by wars, in quiet sleep:
Discharge the trust, which, when it was below,
Fairbone's undaunted soul did undergo,
And be the town's Palladium from the foe.
Alive and dead these walls he will defend:
Great actions great examples must attend.
The Candian siege his early valour knew,
Where Turkish blood did his young hands imbrue.
From thence returning with deserved applause,
Against the Moors his well-flesh'd sword he draws;
The same the courage, and the same the cause.
His youth and age, his life and death, combine,
As in some great and regular design,
All of a piece throughout, and all divine.
Still nearer heaven his virtues shone more bright,
Like rising flames expanding in their height;
The martyr's glory crown'd the soldier's fight.
More bravely British general never fell,
Nor general's death was e'er revenged so well;
Which his pleased eyes beheld before their close,
Follow'd by thousand victims of his foes.
To his lamented loss for time to come
His pious widow consecrates this tomb.

ON THE MONUMENT OF MISS MARY FRAMPTON,

WHO DIED AT BATH, SEPT. 6, 1698, AND IS THERE INTERRED.

Below this marble monument is laid
All that heaven wants of this celestial maid.
Preserve, O sacred tomb, thy trust consign'd;
The mould was made on purpose for the mind:

And she would lose, if, at the latter day,
One atom could be mix'd of other clay.
Such were the features of her heavenly face,
Her limbs were form'd with such harmonious grace;
So faultless was the frame, as if the whole
Had been an emanation of the soul;
Which her own inward symmetry reveal'd;
And like a picture shone, in glass anneal'd:
Or like the sun eclipsed, with shaded light,
Too piercing, else, to be sustain'd by sight:
Each thought was visible that roll'd within,
As through a crystal case the figured hours are seen.
And Heaven did this transparent veil provide,
Because she had no guilty thought to hide.
All white, a virgin-saint, she sought the skies;
For marriage, though it sullies not, it dyes.
High though her wit, yet humble was her mind;
As if she could not, or she would not find
How much her worth transcended all her kind.
Yet she had learn'd so much of heaven below,
That, when arrived, she scarce had more to know;
But only to refresh the former hint,
And read her Maker in a fairer print.
So pious, as she had no time to spare
For human thoughts, but was confined to prayer:
Yet in such charities she pass'd the day,
'Twas wondrous how she found an hour to pray.
A soul so calm, it knew not ebbs or flows,
Which passion could but curl, not discompose.'
A female softness, with a manly mind:
A daughter duteous, and a sister kind:
In sickness patient, and in death resign'd.

EPITAPH ON MRS. MARGARET PASTON

OF BURNINGHAM IN NORFOLK.

So fair, so young, so innocent, so sweet,
So ripe a judgment, and so rare a wit,
Require at least an age in one to meet.
In her they met; but long they could not stay,
'Twas gold too fine to mix without allay.

Heaven's image was in her so well express'd,
Her very sight upbraided all the rest;
Too justly ravish'd from an age like this,
Now she is gone, the world is of a piece.

ON THE MONUMENT OF THE MARQUIS OF WINCHESTER.

He who in impious times undaunted stood,
And 'midst rebellion durst be just and good
Whose arms asserted, and whose sufferings more
Confirm'd the cause for which he fought before,
Rests here, rewarded by an heavenly prince;
For what his earthly could not recompense,
Pray, reader, that such times no more appear:
Or, if they happen, learn true honour here.
Ask of this age's faith and loyalty,
Which to preserve them, Heaven confined in thee.
Few subjects could a king like thine deserve:
And fewer such a king so well could serve.
Blest king, blest subject, whose exalted state
By sufferings rose, and gave the law to fate.
Such souls are rare, but mighty patterns given
To earth, and meant for ornaments to heaven.

UNDER THE PORTRAIT OF JOHN MILTON,

PREFIXED TO 'PARADISE LOST.'

Three Poets in three distant ages born,
Greece, Italy, and England, did adorn.
The first in loftiness of thought surpass'd;
The next in majesty; in both the last.
The force of nature could no further go;
To make a third, she join'd the former two.

TALES FROM CHAUCER:

BEING

PALAMON AND ARCITE. | THE FLOWER AND THE LEAF.
THE COCK AND THE FOX. | THE WIFE OF BATH'S TALE.
THE CHARACTER OF A GOOD PARSON.

TO HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF ORMOND,

WITH THE POEM OF PALAMON AND ARCITE.*

MADAM,

THE bard who first adorn'd our native tongue,
Tuned to his British lyre this ancient song:
Which Homer might without a blush rehearse,
And leaves a doubtful palm in Virgil's verse:
He match'd their beauties, where they most excel;
Of love sung better, and of arms as well.
Vouchsafe, illustrious Ormond, to behold
What power the charms of beauty had of old;
Nor wonder if such deeds of arms were done,
Inspired by two fair eyes, that sparkled like your own.
If Chaucer by the best idea wrought,
And poets can divine each other's thought,
The fairest nymph before his eyes he set;
And then the fairest was Plantagenet;
Who three contending princes made her prize,
And ruled the rival nations with her eyes:
Who left immortal trophies of her fame,
And to the noblest order gave the name.
Like her, of equal kindred to the throne,
You keep her conquests, and extend your own:
As when the stars, in their ethereal race,
At length have roll'd around the liquid space,
At certain periods they resume their place,
From the same point of heaven their course advance,
And move in measures of their former dance;
Thus, after length of ages, she returns,
Restored in you, and the same place adorns;

Or you perform her office in the sphere,
Born of her blood, and make a new Platonic year.
O true Plantagenet, O race divine,
(For beauty still is fatal to the line)
Had Chaucer lived that angel-face to view,
Sure he had drawn his Emily from you;
Or had you lived to judge the doubtful right,
Your noble Palamon had been the knight;
And conquering Theseus from his side had sent
Your generous lord, to guide the Theban government.
Time shall accomplish that; and I shall see
A Palamon in him, in you an Emily.
Already have the fates your path prepared,
And sure presage your future sway declared:
When westward, like the sun, you took your way,
And from benighted Britain bore the day,
Blue Triton gave the signal from the shore,
The ready Nereids heard, and swam before
To smooth the seas; a soft Etesian gale
But just inspired, and gently swell'd the sail;
Portunus took his turn, whose ample hand
Heaved up his lighten'd keel, and sunk the sand,
And steer'd the sacred vessel safe to land.
The land, if not restrain'd, had met your way
Projected out a neck, and jutted to the sea.
Hibernia, prostrate at your feet, adored,
In you, the pledge of her expected lord;
Due to her isle; a venerable name;
His father and his grandsire known to fame;
Awed by that house, accustom'd to command,
The sturdy kerns in due subjection stand;
Nor bear the reins in any foreign hand.
At your approach, they crowded to the port;
And scarcely landed, you create a court:
As Ormond's harbinger, to you they run;
For Venus is the promise of the sun.
The waste of civil wars, their towns destroy'd,
Pales unhonour'd, Ceres unemploy'd,
Were all forgot; and one triumphant day
Wiped all the tears of three campaigns away.
Blood, rapines, massacres, were cheaply bought,
So mighty recompense your beauty brought.
As when the dove returning bore the mark
Of earth restored to the long-labouring ark,

The relics of mankind, secure of rest,
Ope'd every window to receive the guest,
And the fair bearer of the message bless'd;
So, when you came, with loud repeated cries,
The nation took an omen from your eyes,
And God advanced his rainbow in the skies,
To sign inviolable peace restored;
The saints, with solemn shouts, proclaim'd the new accord.
When at your second coming you appear,
(For I foretel that millenary year)
The sharpen'd share shall vex the soil no more,
But earth unbidden shall produce her store;
The land shall laugh, the circling ocean smile,
And Heaven's indulgence bless the holy isle.
Heaven from all ages has reserved for you
That happy clime, which venom never knew;
Or if it had been there, your eyes alone
Have power to chase all poison but their own.
Now in this interval, which fate has cast
Betwixt your future glories, and your past,
This pause of power, 'tis Ireland's hour to mourn;
While England celebrates your safe return,
By which you seem the seasons to command,
And bring our summers back to their forsaken land.
The vanquish'd isle our leisure must attend,
Till the fair blessing we vouchsafe to send;
Nor can we spare you long, though often we may lend.
The dove was twice employ'd abroad, before
The world was dried, and she return'd no more.
Nor dare we trust so soft a messenger,
New from her sickness, to that northern air;
Rest here a while your lustre to restore,
That they may see you, as you shone before;
For yet, the eclipse not wholly past, you wade
Through some remains, and dimness of a shade.
A subject in his prince may claim a right,
Nor suffer him with strength impair'd to fight;
Till force returns, his ardour we restrain,
And curb his warlike wish to cross the main.
Now past the danger, let the learn'd begin
The inquiry, where disease could enter in;
How those malignant atoms forced their way,
What in the faultless frame they found to make their prey?

Where every element was weigh'd so well,
That Heaven alone, who mix'd the mass, could tell
Which of the four ingredients could rebel;
And where, imprison'd in so sweet a cage,
A soul might well be pleased to pass an age.
And yet the fine materials made it weak;
Porcelain, by being pure, is apt to break:
Ev'n to your breast the sickness durst aspire;
And, forced from that fair temple to retire,
Profanely set the holy place on fire.
In vain your lord, like young Vespasian, mourn'd,
When the fierce flames the sanctuary burn'd:
And I prepared to pay in verses rude
A most detested act of gratitude:
Ev'n this had been your elegy, which now
Is offer'd for your health, the table of my vow.
Your angel sure our Morley's mind inspired,
To find the remedy your ill required;
As once the Macedon, by Jove's decree,
Was taught to dream an herb for Ptolemy;
Or Heaven, which had such over-cost bestow'd,
As scarce it could afford to flesh and blood,
So liked the frame, he would not work anew,
To save the charges of another you.
Or by his middle science did he steer,
And saw some great contingent good appear
Well worth a miracle to keep you here:
And for that end, preserved the precious mould,
Which all the future Ormonds was to hold;
And meditated in his better mind
An heir from you, which may redeem the failing kind
Blest be the power which has at once restored
The hopes of lost succession to your lord;
Joy to the first and last of each degree,
Virtue to courts, and, what I long'd to see,
To you the Graces, and the Muse to me.
O daughter of the rose, whose cheeks unite
The differing titles of the red and white;
Who heaven's alternate beauty well display,
The blush of morning, and the milky way;
Whose face is paradise, but fenced from sin;
For God in either eye has placed a cherubin.
All is your lord's alone; even absent, he
Employs the care of chaste Penelope.

For him you waste in tears your widow'd hours,
For him your curious needle paints the flowers;
Such works of old imperial dames were taught;
Such, for Ascanius, fair Elissa wrought.
The soft recesses of your hours improve
The three fair pledges of your happy love:
All other parts of pious duty done,
You owe your Ormond nothing but a son;
To fill in future times his father's place,
And wear the garter of his mother's race.

PALAMON AND ARCITE;

OR, THE KNIGHT'S TALE.

BOOK I.

In days of old, there lived, of mighty fame,
A valiant prince; and Theseus was his name:
A chief, who more in feats of arms excell'd,
The rising nor the setting sun beheld:
Of Athens he was lord; much land he won,
And added foreign countries to his crown:
In Scythia with the warrior queen he strove,
Whom first by force he conquer'd, then by love;
He brought in triumph back the beauteous dame,
With whom her sister, fair Emilia, came.
With honour to his home let Theseus ride,
With love to friend, and fortune for his guide,
And his victorious army at his side.
I pass their warlike pomp, their proud array,
Their shouts, their songs, their welcome on the way:
But, were it not too long, I would recite
The feats of Amazons, the fatal fight
Betwixt the hardy queen and hero knight;
The town besieged, and how much blood it cost
The female army, and the Athenian host;
The spousals of Hippolita the queen;
What tilts and tourneys at the feast were seen;
The storm at their return, the ladies' fear:
But these, and other things, I must forbear.
The field is spacious I design to sow,
With oxen far unfit to draw the plough:

The remnant of my tale is of a length
To tire your patience, and to waste my strength;
And trivial accidents shall be forborne,
That others may have time to take their turn;
As was at first enjoin'd us by mine host:
That he whose tale is best, and pleases most,
Should win his supper at our common cost.
And therefore where I left, I will pursue
This ancient story, whether false or true,
In hope it may be mended with a new.
The prince I mention'd, full of high renown,
In this array drew near the Athenian town;
When in his pomp and utmost of his pride,
Marching, he chanced to cast his eye aside,
And saw a choir of mourning dames, who lay
By two and two across the common way:
At his approach they raised a rueful cry,
And beat their breasts, and held their hands on high,
Creeping and crying, till they seized at last
His courser's bridle, and his feet embraced.
Tell me, said Theseus, what and whence you are,
And why this funeral pageant you prepare?
Is this the welcome of my worthy deeds,
To meet my triumph in ill-omened weeds?
Or envy you my praise, and would destroy
With grief my pleasures, and pollute my joy?
Or are you injured, and demand relief?
Name your request, and I will ease your grief.
The most in years of all the mourning train
Began; (but swooned first away for pain)
Then scarce recover'd spoke: Nor envy we
Thy great renown, nor grudge thy victory;
'Tis thine, O king, the afflicted to redress,
And fame has fill'd the world with thy success:
We wretched women sue for that alone,
Which of thy goodness is refused to none;
Let fall some drops of pity on our grief,
If what we beg be just, and we deserve relief:
For none of us, who now thy grace implore,
But held the rank of sovereign queen before;
Till, thanks to giddy Chance, which never bears,
That mortal bliss should last for length of years,
She cast us headlong from our high estate,
And here in hope of thy return we wait:

And long have waited in the temple nigh,
Built to the gracious goddess Clemency.
But reverence thou the power whose name it bears,
Relieve the oppress'd, and wipe the widow's tears.
I, wretched I, have other fortune seen,
The wife of Capaneus, and once a queen:
At Thebes he fell; cursed be the fatal day!
And all the rest thou seest in this array,
To make their moan, their lords in battle lost
Before that town besieged by our confederate host:
But Creon, old and impious, who commands
The Theban city, and usurps the lands,
Denies the rites of funeral fires to those
Whose breathless bodies yet he calls his foes.
Unburn'd, unburied, on a heap they lie;
Such is their fate, and such is tyranny;
No friend has leave to bear away the dead,
But with their lifeless limbs his hounds are fed.
At this she shriek'd aloud; the mournful train
Echo'd her grief, and, grovelling on the plain,
With groans, and hands upheld, to move his mind,
Besought his pity to their helpless kind!
The prince was touch'd, his tears began to flow,
And, as his tender heart would break in two,
He sigh'd; and could not but their fate deplore,
So wretched now, so fortunate before.
Then lightly from his lofty steed he flew,
And raising one by one the suppliant crew,
To comfort each, full solemnly he swore,
That by the faith which knights to knighthood bore,
And whate'er else to chivalry belongs,
He would not cease, till he revenged their wrongs:
That Greece should see perform'd what he declared;
And cruel Creon find his just reward.
He said no more, but, shunning all delay,
Rode on; nor enter'd Athens on his way:
But left his sister and his queen behind,
And waved his royal banner in the wind:
Where in an argent field the god of war
Was drawn triumphant on his iron car;
Red was his sword, and shield, and whole attire,
And all the godhead seem'd to glow with fire:
Ev'n the ground glitter'd where the standard flew,
And the green grass was dyed to sanguine hue.

High on his pointed lance his pennon bore
His Cretan fight, the conquer'd Minotaur:
The soldiers shout around with generous rage,
And in that victory their own presage.
He praised their ardour; inly pleased to see
His host the flower of Grecian chivalry.
All day he march'd, and all the ensuing night,
And saw the city with returning light.
The process of the war I need not tell,
How Theseus conquer'd, and how Creon fell:
Or after, how by storm the walls were won,
Or how the victor sack'd and burn'd the town:
How to the ladies he restored again
The bodies of their lords in battle slain:
And with what ancient rites they were interr'd;
All these to fitter times shall be deferr'd:
I spare the widows' tears, their woeful cries,
And howling at their husbands' obsequies;
How Theseus at these funerals did assist,
And with what gifts the mourning dames dismiss'd.
Thus when the victor chief had Creon slain,
And conquer'd Thebes, he pitch'd upon the plain
His mighty camp, and, when the day return'd,
The country wasted, and the hamlets burn'd,
And left the pillagers, to rapine bred,
Without control to strip and spoil the dead.
There, in a heap of slain, among the rest
Two youthful knights they found beneath a load oppress'd
Of slaughter'd foes, whom first to death they sent,
The trophies of their strength, a bloody monument.
Both fair, and both of royal blood they seem'd,
Whom kinsmen to the crown the heralds deem'd;
That day in equal arms they fought for fame;
Their swords, their shields, their surcoats were the same.
Close by each other laid, they press'd the ground,
Their manly bosoms pierced with many a ghastly wound;
Nor well alive, nor wholly dead they were,
But some faint signs of feeble life appear:
The wandering breath was on the wing to part,
Weak was the pulse and hardly heaved the heart.
These two were sisters' sons; and Arcite one,
Much famed in fields, with valiant Palamon.
From these their costly arms the spoilers rent,
And softly both convey'd to Theseus' tent:

Whom known of Creon's line, and cured with care,
He to his city sent as prisoners of the war,
Hopeless of ransom, and condemned to lie
In durance, doom'd a lingering death to die.
This done, he march'd away with warlike sound,
And to his Athens turn'd with laurels crown'd,
Where happy long he lived, much loved, and more renown'd.
But in a tower, and never to be loosed,
The woeful captive kinsmen are enclosed:
Thus year by year they pass, and day by day,
Till once, 'twas on the morn of cheerful May,
The young Emilia, fairer to be seen
Than the fair lily on the flowery green,
More fresh than May herself in blossoms new,
For with the rosy colour strove her hue,
Waked, as her custom was, before the day,
To do the observance due to sprightly May:
For sprightly May commands our youth to keep
The vigils of her night, and breaks their sluggard sleep:
Each gentle breast with kindly warmth she moves;
Inspires new flames, revives extinguish'd loves.
In this remembrance Emily ere day
Arose, and dress'd herself in rich array;
Fresh as the month, and as the morning fair:
Adown her shoulders fell her length of hair:
A riband did the braided tresses bind,
The rest was loose, and wanton'd in the wind:
Aurora had but newly chased the night,
And purpled o'er the sky with blushing light,
When to the garden-walk she took her way,
To sport and trip along in cool of day,
And offer maiden vows in honour of the May.
At every turn, she made a little stand,
And thrust among the thorns her lily hand
To draw the rose, and every rose she drew
She shook the stalk, and brush'd away the dew:
Then party-colour'd flowers of white and red
She wove, to make a garland for her head:
This done, she sung and caroll'd out so clear,
That men and angels might rejoice to hear:
Even wondering Philomel forgot to sing:
And learn'd from her to welcome in the spring.
The tower, of which before was mention made,
Within whose keep the captive knights were laid,

PALAMON AND ARCITE.

"In this remembrance Emily ere day
Arose, and dress'd herself in rich array."

P. 302.

Built of a large extent, and strong withal,
Was one partition of the palace wall;
The garden was enclosed within the square,
Where young Emilia took the morning air.
It happen'd Palamon, the prisoner knight,
Restless of woe, arose before the light,
And with his jailor's leave desired to breathe
An air more wholesome than the damps beneath.
This granted, to the tower he took his way,
Cheer'd with the promise of a glorious day:
Then cast a languishing regard around,
And saw, with hateful eyes, the temples crown'd
With golden spires, and all the hostile ground.
He sigh'd, and turn'd his eyes, because he knew
'Twas but a larger jail he had in view:
Then look'd below, and from the castle's height
Beheld a nearer and more pleasing sight:
The garden, which before he had not seen,
In spring's new livery clad of white and green,
Fresh flowers in white parterres, and shady walks between.
This view'd, but not enjoy'd, with arms across
He stood, reflecting on his country's loss;
Himself an object of the public scorn,
And often wish'd he never had been born.
At last, (for so his destiny required,)
With walking giddy, and with thinking tired,
He through a little window cast his sight,
Though thick of bars, that gave a scanty light:
But ev'n that glimmering served him to descry
The inevitable charms of Emily.
Scarce had he seen, but seized with sudden smart,
Stung to the quick, he felt it at his heart;
Struck blind with overpowering light he stood,
Then started back amazed, and cried aloud.
Young Arcite heard; and up he ran with haste,
To help his friend, and in his arms embraced;
And ask'd him why he look'd so deadly wan,
And whence and how his change of cheer began?
Or who had done the offence? But if, said he,
Your grief alone is hard captivity;
For love of heaven with patience undergo
A cureless ill, since fate will have it so:
So stood our horoscope in chains to lie,
And Saturn in the dungeon of the sky,

Or other baleful aspect, ruled our birth,
When all the friendly stars were under earth:
Whate'er betides, by destiny 'tis done;
And better bear like men, than vainly seek to shun.
Nor of my bonds, said Palamon again,
Nor of unhappy planets I complain;
But when my mortal anguish caused my cry,
That moment I was hurt through either eye;
Pierced with a random shaft, I faint away,
And perish with insensible decay:
A glance of some new goddess gave the wound,
Whom, like Actæon, unaware I found.
Look how she walks along yon shady space,
Not Juno moves with more majestic grace;
And all the Cyprian queen is in her face.
If thou art Venus, (for thy charms confess
That face was form'd in heaven,) nor art thou less;
Disguised in habit, undisguised in shape;
Oh, help us captives from our chains to scape!
But if our doom be pass'd in bonds to lie
For life, and in a loathsome dungeon die;
Then be thy wrath appeased with our disgrace,
And show compassion to the Theban race,
Oppress'd by tyrant power! While yet he spoke,
Arcite on Emily had fix'd his look;
The fatal dart a ready passage found,
And deep within his heart infix'd the wound:
So that if Palamon were wounded sore,
Arcite was hurt as much as he, or more:
Then from his inmost soul he sigh'd, and said,
The beauty I behold has struck me dead:
Unknowingly she strikes; and kills by chance;
Poison is in her eyes, and death in every glance.
Oh, I must ask—nor ask alone, but move
Her mind to mercy, or must die for love.
Thus Arcite: and thus Palamon replies,
(Eager his tone, and ardent were his eyes).
Speak'st thou in earnest, or in jesting vein?
Jesting, said Arcite, suits but ill with pain.
It suits far worse, (said Palamon again,
And bent his brows) with men who honour weigh,
Their faith to break, their friendship to betray;
But worst with thee, of noble lineage born,
My kinsman, and in arms my brother sworn.

Have we not plighted each our holy oath,
That one should be the common good of both?
One soul should both inspire, and neither prove
His fellow's hindrance in pursuit of love?
To this before the gods we gave our hands,
And nothing but our death can break the bands.
This binds thee, then, to further my design,
As I am bound by vow to further thine:
Nor canst, nor dar'st thou, traitor, on the plain
Appeach my honour, or thine own maintain,
Since thou art of my council, and the friend
Whose faith I trust, and on whose care depend:
And wouldst thou court my lady's love, which I
Much rather than release would choose to die?
But thou, false Arcite, never shalt obtain
Thy bad pretence; I told thee first my pain:
For first my love began ere thine was born;
Thou as my council, and my brother sworn,
Art bound to assist my eldership of right,
Or justly to be deem'd a perjured knight.
Thus Palamon: but Arcite with disdain
In haughty language thus replied again:
Forsworn thyself: the traitor's odious name
I first return, and then disprove thy claim.
If love be passion, and that passion nursed
With strong desires, I loved the lady first.
Canst thou pretend desire, whom zeal inflamed
To worship, and a power celestial named?
Thine was devotion to the blest above,
I saw the woman, and desired her love:
First own'd my passion, and to thee commend
The important secret, as my chosen friend.
Suppose (which yet I grant not) thy desire
A moment elder than my rival fire;
Can chance of seeing first thy title prove?
And know'st thou not, no law is made for love?
Law is to things which to free choice relate;
Love is not in our choice, but in our fate;
Laws are but positive; love's power, we see,
Is Nature's sanction, and her first decree.
Each day we break the bond of human laws
For love, and vindicate the common cause.
Laws for defence of civil rights are placed,
Love throws the fences down and makes a general waste:

Maids, widows, wives, without distinction fall;
The sweeping deluge, love, comes on and covers all.
If then the laws of friendship I transgress,
I keep the greater, while I break the less;
And both are mad alike, since neither can possess.
Both hopeless to be ransom'd, never more
To see the sun, but as he passes o'er.
Like Æsop's hounds contending for the bone,
Each pleaded right, and would be lord alone:
The fruitless fight continued all the day,
A cur came by, and snatch'd the prize way.
As courtiers therefore justle for a grant,
And when they break their friendship, plead their want,
So thou, if fortune will thy suit advance,
Love on, nor envy me my equal chance:
For I must love, and am resolved to try
My fate, or failing in the adventure die.
Great was their strife, which hourly was renew'd,
Till each with mortal hate his rival view'd:
Now friends no more, nor walking hand in hand;
But when they met, they made a surly stand;
And glared like angry lions as they pass'd,
And wish'd that every look might be their last.
It chanced at length, Pirithous came to attend
This worthy Theseus, his familiar friend;
Their love in early infancy began,
And rose as childhood ripen'd into man,
Companions of the war; and loved so well,
That when one died, as ancient stories tell,
His fellow to redeem him went to hell.
But to pursue my tale; to welcome home
His warlike brother is Pirithous come:
Arcite of Thebes was known in arms long since,
And honour'd by this young Thessalian prince.
Theseus to gratify his friend and guest,
Who made our Arcite's freedom his request,
Restored to liberty the captive knight,
But on these hard conditions I recite:
That if hereafter Arcite should be found
Within the compass of Athenian ground,
By day or night, or on whate'er pretence,
His head should pay the forfeit of the offence.
To this Pirithous for his friend agreed,
And on his promise was the prisoner freed.

Unpleased and pensive hence he takes his way,
At his own peril; for his life must pay.
Who now but Arcite mourns his bitter fate,
Finds his dear purchase, and repents too late?
What have I gain'd, he said, in prison pent,
If I but change my bonds for banishment?
And banish'd from her sight, I suffer more
In freedom, than I felt in bonds before;
Forced from her presence, and condemn'd to live;
Unwelcome freedom, and unthank'd reprieve:
Heaven is not, but where Emily abides,
And where she's absent, all is hell besides.
Next to my day of birth, was that accursed,
Which bound my friendship to Pirithous first:
Had I not known that prince, I still had been
In bondage, and had still Emilia seen:
Eor though I never can her grace deserve,
'Tis recompense enough to see and serve.
O Palamon, my kinsman and my friend,
How much more happy fates thy love attend!
Thine is the adventure; thine the victory:
Well has thy fortune turn'd the dice for thee:
Thou on that angel's face may'st feed thine eyes,
In prison, no; but blissful paradise!
Thou daily seest that sun of beauty shine,
And lov'st at least in love's extremest line.
I mourn in absence, love's eternal night;
And who can tell but since thou hast her sight,
And art a comely, young, and valiant knight,
Fortune (a various power) may cease to frown,
And by some ways unknown thy wishes crown?
But I, the most forlorn of human-kind,
Nor help can hope, nor remedy can find;
But doom'd to drag my loathsome life in care,
For my reward, must end it in despair.
Fire, water, air, and earth, and force of fates,
That governs all, and Heaven that all creates,
Nor art, nor nature's hand can ease my grief;
Nothing but death, the wretch's last relief:
Then farewell youth, and all the joys that dwell,
With youth and life, and life itself farewell.
But why, alas! do mortal men in vain
Of fortune, fate, or Providence complain?

God gives us what he knows our wants require,
And better things than those which we desire:
Some pray for riches—riches they obtain;
But, watch'd by robbers, for their wealth are slain:
Some pray from prison to be freed; and come,
When guilty of their vows, to fall at home;
Murder'd by those they trusted with their life,
A favour'd servant, or a bosom wife.
Such dear-bought blessings happen every day,
Because we know not for what things to pray.
Like drunken sots about the street we roam:
Well knows the sot he has a certain home:
Yet knows not how to find the uncertain place,
And blunders on, and staggers every pace.
Thus all seek happiness; but few can find,
For far the greater part of men are blind.
This is my case, who thought our utmost good
Was in one word of freedom understood:
The fatal blessing came: from prison free,
I starve abroad, and lose the sight of Emily.
Thus Arcite: but if Arcite thus deplore
His sufferings, Palamon yet suffers more.
For when he knew his rival freed and gone,
He swells with wrath; he makes outrageous moan:
He frets, he fumes, he stares, he stamps the ground;
The hollow tower with clamours rings around:
With briny tears he bathed his fetter'd feet,
And droop'd all o'er with agony of sweat.
Alas! he cried! I, wretch in prison pine,
Too happy rival, while the fruit is thine:
Thou liv'st at large, thou draw'st thy native air,
Pleased with thy freedom, proud of my despair:
Thou may'st, since thou hast youth and courage join'd,
A sweet behaviour and a solid mind,
Assemble ours, and all the Theban race,
To vindicate on Athens thy disgrace;
And after, by some treaty made, possess
Fair Emily, the pledge of lasting peace.
So thine shall be the beauteous prize, while I
Must languish in despair, in prison die.
Thus all the advantage of the strife is thine,
Thy portion double joys, and double sorrows mine.
The rage of jealousy then fired his soul,
And his face kindled like a burning coal:

Now cold despair, succeeding in her stead,
To livid paleness turns the glowing red.
His blood, scarce liquid, creeps within his veins,
Like water which the freezing wind constrains.
Then thus he said:—Eternal Deities,
Who rule the world with absolute decrees,
And write whatever time shall bring to pass,
With pens of adamant, on plates of brass;
What, is the race of human kind your care
Beyond what all his fellow-creatures are?
He with the rest is liable to pain,
And like the sheep, his brother-beast, is slain.
Cold, hunger, prisons, ills without a cure,
All these he must, and guiltless oft endure;
Or does your justice, power, or prescience fail,
When the good suffer, and the bad prevail?
What worse to wretched virtue could befal,
If fate or giddy fortune govern'd all?
Nay, worse than other beasts is our estate;
Them, to pursue their pleasures, you create;
We, bound by harder laws, must curb our will,
And your commands, not our desires, fulfil;
Then, when the creature is unjustly slain,
Yet after death at least he feels no pain;
But man in life surcharged with woe before,
Not freed when dead, is doom'd to suffer more.
A serpent shoots his sting at unaware;
An ambush'd thief forelays a traveller;
The man lies murder'd, while the thief and snake,
One gains the thickets, and one thrids the brake.
This let divines decide; but well I know,
Just, or unjust, I have my share of woe,
Through Saturn, seated in a luckless place,
And Juno's wrath, that persecutes my race;
Or Mars and Venus, in a quartile, move
My pangs of jealousy for Arcite's love.
Let Palamon oppress'd in bondage mourn,
While to his exiled rival we return.
By this, the sun, declining from his height,
The day had shorten'd to prolong the night:
The lengthen'd night gave length of misery
Both to the captive lover and the free.
For Palamon in endless prison mourns,
And Arcite forfeits life if he returns:

The banish'd never hopes his love to see,
Nor hopes the captive lord his liberty:
'Tis hard to say who suffers greater pains:
One sees his love, but cannot break his chains:
One free, and all his motions uncontroll'd,
Beholds whate'er he would, but what he would behold.
Judge as you please, for I will haste to tell
What fortune to the banish'd knight befel.—
When Arcite was to Thebes return'd again,
The loss of her he loved renew'd his pain;
What could be worse, than never more to see
His life, his soul, his charming Emily?
He raved with all the madness of despair,
He roar'd, he beat his breast, he tore his hair.
Dry sorrow in his stupid eyes appears,
For, wanting nourishment, he wanted tears:
His eye-balls in their hollow sockets sink,
Bereft of sleep he loathes his meat and drink.
He withers at his heart, and looks as wan
As the pale spectre of a murder'd man:
That pale turns yellow, and his face receives
The faded hue of sapless boxen leaves:
In solitary groves he makes his moan,
Walks early out, and ever is alone:
Nor, mix'd in mirth, in youthful pleasures shares,
But sighs when songs and instruments he hears.
His spirits are so low, his voice is drown'd,
He hears as from afar, or in a swound,
Like the deaf murmurs of a distant sound:
Uncomb'd his locks, and squalid his attire,
Unlike the trim of love and gay desire;
But full of museful mopings, which presage
The loss of reason, and conclude in rage.
This when he had endured a year and more,
Nor wholly changed from what he was before,
It happen'd once, that, slumbering as he lay,
He dream'd, (his dream began at break of day)
That Hermes o'er his head in air appear'd,
And with soft words his drooping spirits cheer'd;
His hat, adorn'd with wings, disclosed the god,
And in his hand he bore the sleep-compelling rod:
Such as he seem'd when, at his sire's command,
On Argus' head he laid the snaky wand.

'Arise, he said, to conquering Athens go,
There fate appoints an end to all thy woe.
The fright awaken'd Arcite with a start,
Against his bosom bounced his heaving heart;
But soon he said, with scarce recover'd breath,
And thither will I go, to meet my death,
Sure to be slain; but death is my desire,
Since in Emilia's sight I shall expire.
By chance he spied a mirror while he spoke,
And gazing there beheld his alter'd look;
Wondering, he saw his features and his hue
So much were changed, that scarce himself he knew.
A sudden thought then starting in his mind,
Since I in Arcite cannot Arcite find,
The world may search in vain with all their eyes,
But never penetrate through this disguise.
Thanks to the change which grief and sickness give,
In low estate I may securely live,
And see unknown my mistress day by day.
He said; and clothed himself in coarse array:
A labouring hind in show; then forth he went,
And to the Athenian towers his journey bent:
One squire attended in the same disguise,
Made conscious of his master's enterprise.
Arrived at Athens, soon he came to court,
Unknown, unquestion'd in that thick resort:
Proffering for hire his service at the gate,
To drudge, draw water, and to run or wait.
So fair befel him, that for little gain
He served at first Emilia's chamberlain;
And, watchful all advantages to spy,
Was still at hand, and in his master's eye;
And as his bones were big, and sinews strong,
Refused no toil that could to slaves belong;
But from deep wells with engines water drew,
And used his noble hands the wood to hew.
He pass'd a year at least attending thus
On Emily, and call'd Philostratus.
But never was there man of his degree
So much esteem'd, so well beloved as he.
So gentle of condition was he known,
That through the court his courtesy was blown:
All think him worthy of a greater place,
And recommend him to the royal grace;

That exercised within a higher sphere,
His virtues more conspicuous might appear.
Thus by the general voice was Arcite praised,
And by great Theseus to high favour raised;
Among his menial servants first enroll'd,
And largely entertain'd with sums of gold:
Besides what secretly from Thebes was sent,
Of his own income, and his annual rent:
This well employ'd, he purchased friends and fame,
But cautiously conceal'd from whence it came.
Thus for three years he lived with large increase,
In arms of honour, and esteem in peace;
To Theseus' person he was ever near;
And Theseus for his virtues held him dear.

BOOK II.

While Arcite lives in bliss, the story turns
Where hopeless Palamon in prison mourns.
For six long years immured, the captive knight
Had dragg'd his chains, and scarcely seen the light:
Lost liberty and love at once he bore:
His prison pain'd him much, his passion more:
Nor dares he hope his fetters to remove,
Nor ever wishes to be free from love.
But when the next revolving year was run,
And May within the Twins received the sun,
Were it by chance, or forceful destiny,
Which forms in causes first whate'er shall be,
Assisted by a friend, one moonless night,
This Palamon from prison took his flight:
A pleasant beverage he prepared before,
Of wine and honey mix'd with added store
Of opium; to his keeper this he brought,
Who swallow'd unaware the sleepy draught,
And snored secure till morn, his senses bound
In slumber, and in long oblivion drown'd.
Short was the night, and careful Palamon
Sought the next covert ere the rising sun.
A thick-spread forest near the city lay,
To this with lengthen'd strides he took his way,
(For far he could not fly, and fear'd the day.)

Safe from pursuit, he meant to shun the light,
Till the brown shadows of the friendly night
To Thebes might favour his intended flight.
When to his country come, his next design
Was all the Theban race in arms to join,
And war on Theseus, till he lost his life,
Or won the beauteous Emily to wife.
Thus while his thoughts the lingering day beguile,
To gentle Arcite let us turn our style;
Who little dreamt how nigh he was to care,
Till treacherous fortune caught him in the snare.
The morning lark, the messenger of day,
Saluted in her song the morning gray;
And soon the sun arose with beams so bright,
That all the horizon laugh'd to see the joyous sight;
He with his tepid rays the rose renews,
And licks the drooping leaves, and dries the dews;
When Arcite left his bed, resolved to pay
Observance to the month of merry May:
Forth on his fiery steed betimes he rode,
That scarcely prints the turf on which he trod:
At ease he seem'd, and, prancing o'er the plains,
Turn'd only to the grove his horse's reins,
The grove I named before; and, lighted there,
A woodbine garland sought to crown his hair;
Then turn'd his face against the rising day,
And raised his voice to welcome in the May.—
For thee, sweet month, the groves green liveries wear,
If not the first, the fairest of the year:
For thee the Graces lead the dancing hours,
And Nature's ready pencil paints the flowers:
When thy short reign is past, the feverish sun
The sultry tropic fears, and moves more slowly on.
So may thy tender blossoms fear no blight,
Nor goats with venom'd teeth thy tendrils bite,
As thou shalt guide my wandering feet to find
The fragrant greens I seek, my brows to bind.
His vows address'd, within the grove he stray'd,
Till fate or fortune near the place convey'd
His steps where secret Palamon was laid.
Full little thought him of the gentle knight,
Who, flying death, had there conceal'd his flight,
In brakes and brambles hid, and shunning mortal sight.

And less he knew him for his hated foe,
But fear'd him as a man he did not know.
But as it has been said of ancient years,
The fields are full of eyes, and woods have ears;
For this the wise are ever on their guard,
For, unforeseen, (they say,) is unprepared.
Uncautious Arcite thought himself alone,
And less than all suspected Palamon;
Who, listening, heard him, while he search'd the grove,
And loudly sung his roundelay of love:
But on the sudden stopp'd, and silent stood,—
As lovers often muse, and change their mood;
Now high as heaven, and then as low as hell;
Now up, now down, as buckets in a well;
For Venus, like her day, will change her cheer,
And seldom shall we see a Friday clear.—
Thus Arcite having sung, with alter'd hue
Sunk on the ground, and from his bosom drew
A desperate sigh, accusing heaven and fate,
And angry Juno's unrelenting hate.
Cursed be the day when first I did appear;
Let it be blotted from the calendar,
Lest it pollute the month, and poison all the year.
Still will the jealous Queen pursue our race?
Cadmus is dead, the Theban city was:
Yet ceases not her hate: for all who come
From Cadmus are involved in Cadmus' doom.
I suffer for my blood: unjust decree!
That punishes another's crime on me.
In mean estate I serve my mortal foe,
The man who caused my country's overthrow.
This is not all; for Juno, to my shame,
Has forced me to forsake my former name;
Arcite I was, Philostratus I am.
That side of heaven is all my enemy;
Mars ruin'd Thebes: his mother ruin'd me.
Of all the royal race remains but one
Besides myself, the unhappy Palamon,
Whom Theseus holds in bonds, and will not free;
Without a crime, except his kin to me.
Yet these, and all the rest, I could endure;
For love's a malady without a cure;
Fierce Love has pierced me with his fiery dart,
He fires within, and hisses at my heart.

Your eyes, fair Emily, my fate pursue;
I suffer for the rest, I die for you.
Of such a goddess no time leaves record,
Who burn'd the temple where she was adored:
And let it burn, I never will complain,
Pleased with my sufferings, if you knew my pain.
At this a sickly qualm his heart assail'd,
His ears ring inward, and his senses fail'd.
No word miss'd Palamon of all he spoke,
But soon to deadly pale he changed his look:
He trembled every limb, and felt a smart,
As if cold steel had glided through his heart;
Nor longer stood, but starting from his place,
Discover'd stood, and show'd his hostile face:
False traitor Arcite, traitor to thy blood,
Bound by thy sacred oath to seek my good,
Now art thou found forsworn, for Emily;
And dar'st attempt her love, for whom I die.
So hast thou cheated Theseus with a wile,
Against thy vow, returning to beguile
Under a borrow'd name: as false to me,
So false thou art to him who set thee free:
But rest assured, that either thou shalt die,
Or else renounce thy claim in Emily;
For though unarm'd I am, and (freed by chance)
Am here without my sword, or pointed lance:
Hope not, base man, unquestion'd hence to go,
For I am Palamon, thy mortal foe.
Arcite, who heard his tale, and knew the man,
His sword unsheathed, and fiercely thus began:
Now, by the gods, who govern heaven above,
Wert thou not weak with hunger, mad with love,
That word had been thy last, or in this grove
This hand should force thee to renounce thy love.
The surety which I gave thee, I defy:
Fool, not to know that love endures no tie,
And Jove but laughs at lovers' perjury.
Know I will serve the fair in thy despite;
But since thou art my kinsman, and a knight,
Here, have my faith, to-morrow in this grove
Our arms shall plead the titles of our love:
And Heaven so help my right, as I alone
Will come, and keep the cause and quarrel both un
known,

With arms of proof both for myself and thee;
Choose thou the best, and leave the worst to me.
And, that at better ease thou may'st abide,
Bedding and clothes I will this night provide,
And needful sustenance, that thou may'st be
A conquest better won, and worthy me.
His promise Palamon accepts; but pray'd,
To keep it better than the first he made.
Thus fair they parted till the morrow's dawn,
For each had laid his plighted faith to pawn.
Oh Love! thou sternly dost thy power maintain,
And wilt not bear a rival in thy reign,
Tyrants and thou all fellowship disdain.
This was in Arcite proved, and Palamon,
Both in despair, yet each would love alone.
Arcite return'd, and, as in honour tied,
His foe with bedding, and with food supplied;
Then, ere the day, two suits of armour sought,
Which borne before him on his steed he brought:
Both were of shining steel, and wrought so pure,
As might the strokes of two such arms endure.
Now, at the time, and in the appointed place,
The challenger and challenged, face to face,
Approach; each other from afar they knew,
And from afar their hatred changed their hue.
So stands the Thracian herdsman with his spear,
Full in the gap, and hopes the hunted bear,
And hears him rustling in the wood, and sees
His course at distance by the bending trees;
And thinks, Here comes my mortal enemy,
And either he must fall in fight, or I:
This while he thinks, he lifts aloft his dart;
A generous chilness seizes every part:
The veins pour back the blood, and fortify the heart.
Thus pale they meet; their eyes with fury burn;
None greets; for none the greeting will return:
But in dumb surliness, each arm'd with care
His foe profess'd, as brother of the war:
Then both, no moment lost, at once advance
Against each other, arm'd with sword and lance:
They lash, they foin, they pass, they strive to bore
Their corslets, and the thinnest parts explore.
Thus two long hours in equal arms they stood,
And, wounded, wound; till both were bathed in blood;

And not a foot of ground had either got,
As if the world depended on the spot.
Fell Arcite like an angry tiger fared,
And like a lion Palamon appear'd:
Or, as two boars, whom love to battle draws,
With rising bristles, and with frothy jaws,
Their adverse breasts with tusks oblique they wound;
With grunts and groans the forest rings around.
So fought the knights, and fighting must abide,
Till fate an umpire sends their difference to decide.
The power that ministers to God's decrees,
And executes on earth what Heaven foresees,
Call'd Providence, or Chance, or Fatal Sway,
Comes with resistless force, and finds or makes her way,
Nor kings, nor nations, nor united power,
One moment can retard the appointed hour,
And some one day, some wondrous chance appears,
Which happen'd not in centuries of years:
For sure, whate'er we mortals hate, or love,
Or hope, or fear, depends on powers above;
They move our appetites to good or ill,
And by foresight necessitate the will.
  In Theseus this appears; whose youthful joy
Was beasts of chace in forests to destroy;
This gentle knight, inspired by jolly May,
Forsook his easy couch at early day,
And to the wood and wilds pursued his way.
Beside him rode Hippolita the queen,
And Emily attired in lively green,
With horns, and hounds, and all the tuneful cry,
To hunt a royal hart within the covert nigh:
And as he follow'd Mars before, so now
He serves the goddess of the silver bow.
The way that Theseus took was to the wood
Where the two knights in cruel battle stood:
The lawn on which they fought, the appointed place
In which the uncoupled hounds began the chace.
Thither forth-right he rode to rouse the prey,
That shaded by the fern in harbour lay;
And thence dislodged, was wont to leave the wood,
For open fields, and cross the crystal flood.
Approach'd, and looking underneath the sun,
He saw proud Arcite, and fierce Palamon,

In mortal battle doubling blow on blow;
Like lightning flamed their falchions to and fro,
And shot a dreadful gleam; so strong they strook,
There seem'd less force required to fell an oak:
He gazed with wonder on their equal might,
Look'd eager on, but knew not either knight:
Resolved to learn, he spurr'd his fiery steed
With goring rowels to provoke his speed.
The minute ended that began the race,
So soon he was betwixt 'em on the place;
And with his sword unsheathed, on pain of life
Commands both combatants to cease their strife:
Then with imperious tone pursues his threat;
What are you? why in arms together met?
How dares your pride presume against my laws,
As in a listed field to fight your cause?
Unask'd the royal grant; no marshal by,
As knightly rites require; nor judge to try?
Then Palamon, with scarce recover'd breath,
Thus hasty spoke: We both deserve the death,
And both would die; for look the world around,
A pair so wretched is not to be found.
Our life 's a load; encumber'd with the charge,
We long to set the imprison'd soul at large.
Now, as thou art a sovereign judge, decree
The rightful doom of death to him and me;
Let neither find thy grace; for grace is cruelty.
Me first, oh, kill me first; and cure my woe:
Then sheathe the sword of justice on my foe:
Or kill him first; for when his name is heard,
He foremost will receive his due reward.
Arcite of Thebes is he; thy mortal foe:
On whom thy grace did liberty bestow,
But first contracted, that if ever found
By day or night upon the Athenian ground,
His head should pay the forfeit; see return'd
The perjured knight, his oath and honour scorn'd.
For this is he, who, with a borrow'd name
And proffer'd service, to thy palace came,
Now call'd Philostratus: retain'd by thee,
A traitor trusted, and in high degree,
Aspiring to the bed of beauteous Emily.
My part remains; from Thebes my birth I own,
And call myself the unhappy Palamon.

Think me not like that man; since no disgrace
Can force me to renounce the honour of my race.
Know me for what I am: I broke my chain,
Nor promised I thy prisoner to remain:
The love of liberty with life is given,
And life itself the inferior gift of Heaven.
Thus without crime I fled; but farther know,
I, with this Arcite, am thy mortal foe:
Then give me death, since I thy life pursue;
For safeguard of thyself, death is my due.
More would'st thou know? I love bright Emily,
And, for her sake, and in her sight, will die:
But kill my rival too; for he no less
Deserves; and I thy righteous doom will bless,
Assured that what I lose, he never shall possess.
To this replied the stern Athenian prince,
And sourly smiled: In owning your offence
You judge yourself; and I but keep record
In place of law, while you pronounce the word.
Take your desert, the death you have decreed;
I seal your doom, and ratify the deed:
By Mars, the patron of my arms, you die.
He said; dumb sorrow seized the standers-by.
The queen above the rest, by nature good,
(The pattern form'd of perfect womanhood)
For tender pity wept: when she began,
Through the bright quire the infectious virtue ran.
All dropp'd their tears, even the contended maid:
And thus among themselves they softly said:
What eyes can suffer this unworthy sight!
Two youths of royal blood, renown'd in fight,
The mastership of heaven in face and mind,
And lovers, far beyond their faithless kind:
See their wide-streaming wounds: they neither came
For pride of empire, nor desire of fame:
Kings fight for kingdoms, madmen for applause:
But love for love alone; that crowns the lover's cause.
This thought, which ever bribes the beauteous kind,
Such pity wrought in every lady's mind,
They left their steeds, and prostrate on the place,
From the fierce king implored the offenders' grace.
He paused a while, stood silent in his mood,
(For yet his rage was boiling in his blood;)

But soon his tender mind the impression felt,
(As softest metals are not slow to melt,
And pity soonest runs in softest minds;)
Then reasons with himself; and first he finds
His passion cast a mist before his sense,
And either made, or magnified the offence.
Offence? of what? to whom? who judged the cause?
The prisoner freed himself by nature's laws:
Born free, he sought his right: the man he freed
Was perjured, but his love excused the deed:
Thus pondering, he look'd under with his eyes,
And saw the women's tears, and heard their cries;
Which moved compassion more; he shook his head,
And softly sighing to himself he said:—
Curse on the unpardoning prince, whom tears can draw
To no remorse; who rules by lions' law;
And deaf to prayers, by no submission bow'd,
Rends all alike; the penitent, and proud!
At this, with look serene, he raised his head;
Reason resumed her place, and passion fled:
Then thus aloud he spoke: The power of love,
In earth, and seas, and air, and heaven above,
Rules, unresisted, with an awful nod;
By daily miracles declared a god:
He blinds the wise, gives eye-sight to the blind;
And moulds and stamps anew the lover's mind.
Behold that Arcite, and this Palamon,
Freed from my fetters, and in safety gone,
What hinder'd either in their native soil
At ease to reap the harvest of their toil?
But Love, their lord, did otherwise ordain,
And brought 'em in their own despite again,
To suffer death deserved; for well they know,
'Tis in my power, and I their deadly foe.
The proverb holds, that to be wise and love,
Is hardly granted to the gods above.
See how the madmen bleed: behold the gains
With which their master, Love, rewards their pains.
For seven long years, on duty every day,
Lo their obedience, and their monarch's pay:
Yet, as in duty bound, they serve him on;
And, ask the fools, they think it wisely done;
Nor ease, nor wealth, nor life itself, regard,
For 'tis their maxim, Love is love's reward.

This is not all; the fair, for whom they strove,
Nor knew before, nor could suspect their love,
Nor thought, when she beheld the fight from far,
Her beauty was the occasion of the war.
But sure a general doom on man is pass'd,
And all are fools and lovers, first or last:
This, both by others and myself, I know,
For I have served their sovereign long ago;
Oft have been caught within the winding train
Of female snares, and felt the lover's pain,
And learn'd how far the god can human hearts constrain.
To this remembrance, and the prayers of those,
Who for the offending warriors interpose,
I give their forfeit lives; on this accord,
To do me homage as their sovereign lord;
And as my vassals, to their utmost might,
Assist my person, and assert my right.
This freely sworn, the knights their grace obtain'd.
Then thus the king his secret thoughts explain'd:
If wealth, or honour, or a royal race,
Or each, or all may win a lady's grace,
Then either of you knights may well deserve
A princess born; and such is she you serve:
For Emily is sister to the crown,
And but too well to both her beauty known:
But should you combat till you both were dead,
Two lovers cannot share a single bed:
As therefore both are equal in degree,
The lot of both be left to destiny.
Now hear the award, and happy may it prove
To her, and him who best deserves her love.
Depart from hence in peace, and, free as air,
Search the wide world, and where you please repair;
But on the day when this returning sun
To the same point through every sign has run,
Then each of you his hundred knights shall bring,
In royal lists, to fight before the king;
And then the knight, whom fate or happy chance
Shall with his friends to victory advance,
And grace his arms so far in equal fight,
From out the bars to force his opposite,
Or kill, or make him recreant on the plain,
The prize of valour and of love shall gain;

The vanquish'd party shall their claim release,
And the long jars conclude in lasting peace.
The charge be mine to adorn the chosen ground,
The theatre of war, for champions so renown'd;
And take the patron's place, of either knight,
With eyes impartial to behold the fight;
And Heaven of me so judge as I shall judge aright.
If both are satisfied with this accord,
Swear by the laws of knighthood on my sword.
Who now but Palamon exults with joy?
And ravish'd Arcite seems to touch the sky:
The whole assembled troop was pleased as well,
Extol the award, and on their knees they fell
To bless the gracious king. The knights with leave
Departing from the place, his last commands receive;
On Emily with equal ardour look,
And from her eyes their inspiration took.
From thence to Thebes' old walls pursue their way,
Each to provide his champions for the day.
It might be deem'd, on our historian's part,
Or too much negligence, or want of art,
If he forgot the vast magnificence
Of royal Theseus, and his large expense.
He first enclosed for lists a level ground,
The whole circumference a mile around;
The form was circular; and all without
A trench was sunk, to moat the place about.
Within an amphitheatre appear'd,
Raised in degrees, to sixty paces rear'd:
That when a man was placed in one degree,
Height was allow'd for him above to see.
Eastward was built a gate of marble white;
The like adorn'd the western opposite.
A nobler object than this fabric was,
Rome never saw; nor of so vast a space.
For rich with spoils of many a conquer'd land,
All arts and artists Theseus could command;
Who sold for hire, or wrought for better fame;
The master-painters, and the carvers, came.
So rose within the compass of the year
An age's work, a glorious theatre.
Then o'er its eastern gate was raised above
A temple, sacred to the Queen of Love;

An altar stood below: on either hand
A priest with roses crown'd, who held a myrtle wand.
The dome of Mars was on the gate opposed,
And on the north a turret was enclosed,
Within the walls of alabaster white,
And crimson coral for the queen of night,
Who takes in sylvan sports her chaste delight.
Within these oratories might you see
Rich carvings, portraitures, and imagery:
Where every figure to the life express'd
The godhead's power to whom it was address'd.
In Venus' temple on the sides were seen
The broken slumbers of enamour'd men,
Prayers that ev'n spoke, and pity seem'd to call,
And issuing sighs that smoked along the wall.
Complaints, and hot desires, the lover's hell,
And scalding tears that wore a channel where they fell:
And all around were nuptial bonds, the ties,
Of love's assurance, and a train of lies,
That, made in lust, conclude in perjuries.
Beauty, and Youth, and Wealth, and Luxury,
And sprightly Hope, and short-enduring Joy;
And Sorceries to raise the infernal powers,
And Sigils framed in planetary hours:
Expense, and After-thought, and idle Care,
And Doubts of motley hue, and dark Despair;
Suspicions, and fantastical Surmise,
And Jealousy suffused, with jaundice in her eyes,
Discolouring all she view'd, in tawny dress'd;
Down-look'd, and with a cuckoo on her fist.
Opposed to her, on t' other side advance
The costly feast, the carol, and the dance,
Minstrels, and music, poetry, and play,
And balls by night, and tournaments by day.
All these were painted on the walls, and more;
With acts and monuments of times before:
And others added by prophetic doom,
And lovers yet unborn, and loves to come:
For there the Idalian mount, and Citheron,
The court of Venus, was in colours drawn:
Before the palace-gate, in careless dress,
And loose array, sat portress Idleness:
There, by the fount, Narcissus pined alone;
There Samson was; with wiser Solomon,

And all the mighty names by love undone.
Medea's charms were there, Circean feasts,
With bowls that turn'd enamour'd youths to beasts:
Here might be seen, that beauty, wealth, and wit,
And prowess, to the power of love submit:
The spreading snare for all mankind is laid;
And lovers all betray, and are betray'd.
The goddess' self some noble hand had wrought;
Smiling she seem'd, and full of pleasing thought:
From ocean as she first began to rise,
And smooth'd the ruffled seas, and clear'd the skies;
She trod the brine all bare below the breast,
And the green waves but ill conceal'd the rest.
A lute she held; and on her head was seen
A wreath of roses red, and myrtles green;
Her turtles fann'd the buxom air above;
And, by his mother, stood an infant Love,
With wings unfledged; his eyes were banded o'er;
His hands a bow, his back a quiver bore,
Supplied with arrows bright and keen, a deadly store.
But in the dome of mighty Mars the red
With different figures all the sides were spread;
This temple, less in form, with equal grace,
Was imitative of the first in Thrace:
For that cold region was the loved abode,
And sovereign mansion of the warrior god.
The landscape was a forest wide and bare;
Where neither beast, nor human kind repair;
The fowl, that scent afar, the borders fly,
And shun the bitter blast, and wheel about the sky.
A cake of scurf lies baking on the ground,
And prickly stubs, instead of trees, are found;
Or woods with knots and knares deform'd and old;
Headless the most, and hideous to behold:
A rattling tempest through the branches went,
That stripp'd 'em bare, and one sole way they bent.
Heaven froze above, severe, the clouds congeal,
And through the crystal vault appear'd the standing hail.
Such was the face without: a mountain stood
Threatening from high, and overlook'd the wood:
Beneath the lowering brow, and on a bent,
The temple stood of Mars armipotent:
The frame of burnish'd steel, that cast a glare
From far, and seem'd to thaw the freezing air.

A strait long entry to the temple led,
Blind with high walls, and horror over head:
Thence issued such a blast, and hollow roar,
As threaten'd from the hinge to heave the door;
In, through that door, a northern light there shone;
'Twas all it had, for windows there were none.
The gate was adamant; eternal frame!
Which, hew'd by Mars himself, from Indian quarries came,
The labour of a god; and all along
Tough iron plates were clench'd to make it strong.
A tun about was every pillar there;
A polish'd mirror shone not half so clear.
There saw I how the secret felon wrought,
And treason labouring in the traitor's thought,
And midwife Time the ripen'd plot to murder brought.
There the red Anger dared the pallid Fear;
Next stood Hypocrisy, with holy leer;
Soft smiling, and demurely looking down,
But hid the dagger underneath the gown:
The assassinating wife, the household fiend,
And far the blackest there, the traitor-friend.
On t'other side there stood Destruction bare;
Unpunish'd Rapine, and a waste of war.
Contest, with sharpen'd knives in cloisters drawn,
And all with blood bespread the holy lawn.
Loud menaces were heard, and foul disgrace,
And bawling infamy, in language base;
Till sense was lost in sound, and silence fled the place.
The slayer of himself yet saw I there,
The gore congeal'd was clotted in his hair:
With eyes half closed, and gaping mouth he lay,
And grim, as when he breathed his sullen soul away.
In midst of all the dome, Misfortune sat,
And gloomy Discontent, and fell Debate,
And Madness laughing in his ireful mood;
And arm'd complaint on theft; and cries of blood.
There was the murder'd corpse, in covert laid,
And violent death in thousand shapes display'd:
The city to the soldier's rage resign'd:
Successless wars, and poverty behind:
Ships burnt in fight, or forced on rocky shores,
And the rash hunter strangled by the boars:
The new-born babe by nurses overlaid;
And the cook caught within the raging fire he made.

All ills of Mars's nature, flame, and steel:
The gasping charioteer, beneath the wheel
Of his own car; the ruin'd house that falls
And intercepts her lord betwixt the walls:
The whole division that to Mars pertains,
All trades of death that deal in steel for gains,
Were there: the butcher, armourer, and smith,
Who forges sharpen'd falchions, or the scythe.
The scarlet Conquest on a tower was placed,
With shouts, and soldiers' acclamations graced;
A pointed sword hung threatening o'er his head,
Sustain'd but by a slender twine of thread.
There saw I Mars's Ides, the Capitol,
The seer in vain foretelling Cæsar's fall;
The last triumvirs, and the wars they move,
And Antony, who lost the world for love.
These, and a thousand more, the fane adorn;
Their fates were painted ere the men were born,
All copied from the heavens, and ruling force
Of the red star, in his revolving course.
The form of Mars high on a chariot stood,
All sheathed in arms, and gruffly look'd the god:
Two geomantic figures were display'd
Above his head, a warrior and a maid,
One when direct, and one when retrograde.
Tired with deformities of death, I haste
To the third temple of Diana chaste.
A sylvan scene with various greens was drawn,
Shades on the sides, and in the midst a lawn:
The silver Cynthia, with her nymphs around,
Pursued the flying deer, the woods with horns resound:
Calisto there stood manifest of shame,
And, turn'd a bear, the northern star became:
Her son was next, and, by peculiar grace,
In the cold circle held the second place:
The stag Actæon in the stream had spied
The naked huntress, and, for seeing, died:
His hounds, unknowing of his change, pursue
The chace, and their mistaken master slew.
Penelan Daphne too was there to see,
Apollo's love before, and now his tree:
The adjoining fane the assembled Greeks express'd,
And hunting of the Caledonian beast.

Œnides' valour, and his envied prize:
The fatal power of Atalanta's eyes;
Diana's vengeance on the victor shown,
The murd'ress mother, and consuming son;
The Volscian queen extended on the plain;
The treason punish'd, and the traitor slain.
The rest were various huntings, well design'd,
And savage beasts destroy'd, of every kind.
The graceful goddess was array'd in green;
About her feet were little beagles seen,
That watch'd with upward eyes the motions of their queen.
Her legs were buskin'd, and the left before
In act to shoot; a silver bow she bore,
And at her back a painted quiver wore.
She trod a waxing moon, that soon would wane,
And, drinking borrow'd light, be fill'd again:
With downcast eyes, as seeming to survey
The dark dominions, her alternate sway.
Before her stood a woman in her throes,
And call'd Lucina's aid her burthen to disclose.
All these the painter drew with such command,
That Nature snatch'd the pencil from his hand,
Ashamed and angry that his art could feign
And mend the tortures of a mother's pain.
Theseus beheld the fanes of every god,
And thought his mighty cost was well bestow'd.
So princes now their poets should regard;
But few can write, and fewer can reward.
The theatre thus raised, the lists enclosed,
And all with vast magnificence disposed,
We leave the monarch pleased, and haste to bring
The knights to combat, and their arms to sing.

BOOK III.

The day approach'd when fortune should decide
The important enterprise, and give the bride;
For now, the rivals round the world had sought,
And each his number, well appointed, brought.
The nations, far and near, contend in choice,
And send the flower of war by public voice;

That after, or before, were never known
Such chiefs, as each an army seem'd alone:
Beside the champions, all of high degree,
Who knighthood loved, and deeds of chivalry,
Throng'd to the lists, and envied to behold
The names of others, not their own, enroll'd.
Nor seems it strange; for every noble knight
Who loves the fair, and is endued with might,
In such a quarrel would be proud to fight.
There breathes not scarce a man on British ground
(An isle for love, and arms, of old renown'd)
But would have sold his life to purchase fame,
To Palamon or Arcite sent his name:
And had the land selected of the best,
Half had come hence, and let the world provide the rest.
A hundred knights with Palamon there came,
Approved in fight, and men of mighty name;
Their arms were several, as their nations were,
But furnish'd all alike with sword and spear.
Some wore coat-armour, imitating scale;
And next their skins were stubborn shirts of mail.
Some wore a breast-plate and a light jupon,
Their horses clothed with rich caparison:
Some for defence would leathern bucklers use,
Of folded hides; and others shields of Pruss.
One hung a pole-axe at his saddle-bow,
And one a heavy mace to shun the foe;
One for his legs and knees provided well,
With jambeaux arm'd, and double plates of steel:
This on his helmet wore a lady's glove,
And that a sleeve embroider'd by his love.
With Palamon above the rest in place,
Lycurgus came, the surly king of Thrace;
Black was his beard and manly was his face;
The balls of his broad eyes roll'd in his head,
And glared betwixt a yellow and a red:
He look'd a lion with a gloomy stare,
And o'er his eye-brows hung his matted hair:
Big-boned, and large of limbs, with sinews strong,
Broad-shoulder'd, and his arms were round and long.
Four milk-white bulls (the Thracian use of old)
Were yoked to draw his car of burnish'd gold.
Upright he stood, and bore aloft his shield,
Conspicuous from afar, and overlook'd the field.

His surcoat was a bear-skin on his back;
His hair hung long behind, and glossy raven black.
His ample forehead bore a coronet
With sparkling diamonds, and with rubies set:
Ten brace, and more, of greyhounds, snowy fair,
And tall as stags, ran loose, and coursed around his chair,
A match for pards in flight, in grappling for the bear:
With golden muzzles all their mouths were bound,
And collars of the same their necks surround.
Thus through the fields Lycurgus took his way;
His hundred knights attend in pomp and proud array.
To match this monarch, with strong Arcite came
Emetrius, king of Ind, a mighty name!
On a bay courser, goodly to behold,
The trappings of his horse adorn'd with barbarous gold.
Not Mars bestrode a steed with greater grace;
His surcoat o'er his arms was cloth of Thrace,
Adorn'd with pearls, all orient, round, and great;
His saddle was of gold, with emeralds set;
His shoulders large a mantle did attire,
With rubies thick, and sparkling as the fire:
His amber-colour'd locks in ringlets run,
With graceful negligence, and shone against the sun.
His nose was aquiline, his eyes were blue,
Ruddy his lips, and fresh and fair his hue:
Some sprinkled freckles on his face were seen,
Whose dusk set off the whiteness of the skin:
His awful presence did the crowd surprise,
Nor durst the rash spectator meet his eyes:
Eyes that confess'd him born for kingly sway,
So fierce, they flash'd intolerable day.
His age in nature's youthful prime appear'd,
And just began to bloom his yellow beard.
Whene'er he spoke, his voice was heard around,
Loud as a trumpet, with a silver sound:
A laurel wreath'd his temples, fresh, and green;
And myrtle sprigs, the marks of love, were mix'd between.
Upon his fist he bore, for his delight,
An eagle well reclaim'd, and lily white.
His hundred knights attend him to the war,
All arm'd for battle; save their heads were bare.
Words and devices blazed on every shield,
And pleasing was the terror of the field.

For kings, and dukes, and barons, you might see,
Like sparkling stars, though different in degree,
All for the increase of arms, and love of chivalry.
Before the king tame leopards led the way,
And troops of lions innocently play.
So Bacchus through the conquer'd Indies rode,
And beasts in gambols frisk'd before their honest god.
In this array the war of either side
Through Athens pass'd with military pride.
At prime, they enter'd on the Sunday morn;
Rich tapestry spread the streets, and flowers the posts adorn.
The town was all a jubilee of feasts;
So Theseus will'd, in honour of his guests;
Himself with open arms the kings embraced,
Then all the rest in their degrees were graced.
No harbinger was needful for the night,
For every house was proud to lodge a knight.
I pass the royal treat, nor must relate
The gifts bestow'd, nor how the champions sate:
Who first, who last, or how the knights address'd
Their vows, or who was fairest at the feast;
Whose voice, whose graceful dance did most surprise;
Soft amorous sighs, and silent love of eyes.
The rivals call my Muse another way,
To sing their vigils for the ensuing day.
'Twas ebbing darkness, past the noon of night:
And Phosphor, on the confines of the light,
Promised the sun; ere day began to spring,
The tuneful lark already stretch'd her wing,
And flickering on her nest made short essays to sing.
When wakeful Palamon, preventing day,
Took to the royal lists his early way,
To Venus at her fane, in her own house, to pray.
There, falling on his knees before her shrine,
He thus implored with prayers her power divine:—
Creator Venus, genial power of love,
The bliss of men below, and gods above!
Beneath the sliding sun thou runn'st thy race,
Dost fairest shine, and best become thy place.
For thee the winds their eastern blasts forbear,
Thy month reveals the spring, and opens all the year.
Thee, goddess, thee the storms of winter fly,
Earth smiles with flowers renewing, laughs the sky,
And birds to lays of love their tuneful notes apply.

For thee the lion loathes the taste of blood,
And roaring hunts his female through the wood;
For thee the bulls rebellow through the groves,
And tempt the stream, and snuff their absent loves.
'Tis thine, whate'er is pleasant, good, or fair:
All nature is thy province, life thy care:
Thou mad'st the world, and dost the world repair
Thou gladder of the mount of Cytheron,
Increase of Jove, companion of the sun;
If e'er Adonis touch'd thy tender heart,
Have pity, goddess, for thou know'st the smart.
Alas! I have not words to tell my grief;
To vent my sorrow would be some relief;
Light sufferings give us leisure to complain;
We groan, but cannot speak, in greater pain.
O goddess, tell thyself what I would say,
Thou know'st it, and I feel too much to pray.
So grant my suit, as I enforce my might,
In love to be thy champion, and thy knight;
A servant to thy sex, a slave to thee,
A foe profess'd to barren chastity.
Nor ask I fame or honour of the field,
Nor choose I more to vanquish than to yield:
In my divine Emilia make me blest,
Let Fate, or partial Chance, dispose the rest:
Find thou the manner, and the means prepare:
Possession, more than conquest, is my care.
Mars is the warrior's god; in him it lies,
On whom he favours to confer the prize;
With smiling aspect you serenely move
In your fifth orb, and rule the realm of love.
The Fates but only spin the coarser clue,
The finest of the wool is left for you;
Spare me but one small portion of the twine,
And let the sisters cut below your line:
The rest among the rubbish may they sweep,
Or add it to the yarn of some old miser's heap.
But, if you this ambitious prayer deny,
(A wish, I grant, beyond mortality,)
Then let me sink beneath proud Arcite's arms,
And I once dead, let him possess her charms.
Thus ended he; then with observance due
The sacred incense on her altar threw:

The curling smoke mounts heavy from the fires;
At length it catches flame, and in a blaze expires;
At once the gracious goddess gave the sign,
Her statue shook, and trembled all the shrine:
Pleased Palamon the tardy omen took;
For, since the flames pursued the trailing smoke,
He knew his boon was granted; but the day
To distance driven, and joy adjourn'd with long delay.
Now morn with rosy light had streak'd the sky,
Up rose the sun, and up rose Emily;
Address'd her early steps to Cynthia's fane,
In state attended by her maiden train,
Who bore the vests that holy rites require,
Incense, and odorous gums, and cover'd fire.
The plenteous horns with pleasant mead they crown,
Nor wanted aught besides in honour of the Moon.
Now while the temple smoked with hallow'd steam,
They wash the virgin in a living stream;
The secret ceremonies I conceal,
Uncouth, perhaps unlawful, to reveal:
But such they were as pagan use required,
Perform'd by women when the men retired,
Whose eyes profane their chaste mysterious rites
Might turn to scandal, or obscene delights.
Well-meaners think no harm; but for the rest,
Things sacred they pervert, and silence is the best.
Her shining hair, uncomb'd, was loosely spread,
A crown of mastless oak adorn'd her head:
When to the shrine approach'd, the spotless maid
Had kindling fires on either altar laid:
(The rites were such as were observed of old,
By Statius in his Theban story told.)
Then kneeling with her hands across her breast,
Thus lowly she preferr'd her chaste request:—
O goddess, haunter of the woodland green,
To whom both heaven and earth and seas are seen;
Queen of the nether skies, where half the year
Thy silver beams descend, and light the gloomy sphere;
Goddess of maids, and conscious of our hearts,
So keep me from the vengeance of thy darts,
(Which Niobe's devoted issue felt,
When hissing through the skies the feather'd deaths were dealt,)

As I desire to live a virgin life,
Nor know the name of mother or of wife.
Thy vot'ress from my tender years I am,
And love, like thee, the woods and sylvan game.
Like death, thou know'st, I loathe the nuptial state,
And man, the tyrant of our sex, I hate,
A lowly servant, but a lofty mate;
Where love is duty on the female side;
On their's mere sensual gust, and sought with surly pride.
Now by thy triple shape, as thou art seen
In heaven, earth, hell, and everywhere a queen,
Grant this my first desire; let discord cease,
And make betwixt the rivals lasting peace:
Quench their hot fire, or far from me remove
The flame, and turn it on some other love;
Or, if my frowning stars have so decreed,
That one must be rejected, one succeed,
Make him my lord, within whose faithful breast
Is fix'd my image, and who loves me best.
But, oh! ev'n that avert; I choose it not,
But take it as the least unhappy lot.
A maid I am, and of thy virgin train;
Oh, let me still that spotless name retain!
Frequent the forests, thy chaste will obey,
And only make the beasts of chace my prey!
The flames ascend on either altar clear,
While thus the blameless maid address'd her prayer.
When lo! the burning fire that shone so bright,
Flew off all sudden, with extinguish'd light,
And left one altar dark, a little space;
Which turn'd self-kindled, and renew'd the blaze;
That other victor-flame a moment stood,
Then fell, and lifeless left the extinguish'd wood;
For ever lost, the irrevocable light
Forsook the blackening coals, and sunk to night:
At either end it whistled as it flew,
And as the brands were green, so dropp'd the dew;
Infected, as it fell, with sweat of sanguine hue.
The maid from that ill omen turn'd her eyes,
And with loud shrieks and clamours rent the skies,
Nor knew what signified the boding sign,
But found the powers displeased, and fear'd the wrath divine.

Then shook the sacred shrine, and sudden light
Sprung through the vaulted roof, and made the temple bright.
The power, behold! the power in glory shone,
By her bent bow, and her keen arrows known;
The rest, a huntress issuing from the wood,
Reclining on her cornel spear she stood.
Then gracious thus began:—Dismiss thy fear,
And Heaven's unchanged decrees attentive hear:
More powerful gods have torn thee from my side,
Unwilling to resign, and doom'd a bride:
The two contending knights are weigh'd above;
One Mars protects, and one the Queen of Love:
But which the man, is in the Thunderer's breast;
This he pronounced,—'tis he who loves thee best.
The fire that, once extinct, revived again,
Foreshows the love allotted to remain:
Farewell! she said; and vanish'd from the place;
The sheaf of arrows shook, and rattled in the case.
Aghast at this, the royal virgin stood,
Disclaim'd, and now no more a sister of the wood:
But to the parting goddess thus she pray'd;
Propitious still be present to my aid,
Nor quite abandon your once favour'd maid.
Then sighing she return'd; but smiled betwixt,
With hopes, and fears, and joys with sorrows mixt.
The next returning planetary hour
Of Mars, who shared the heptarchy of power,
His steps bold Arcite to the temple bent,
To adore with pagan rites the power armipotent:
Then prostrate low before his altar lay,
And raised his manly voice, and thus began to pray:—
Strong god of arms! whose iron sceptre sways
The freezing North, and Hyperborean seas,
And Scythian colds, and Thracia's wintry coast,
Where stand thy steeds, and thou art honour'd most;
There most; but everywhere thy power is known,
The fortune of the fight is all thy own:
Terror is thine, and wild amazement, flung
From out thy chariot, withers e'en the strong:
And disarray and shameful rout ensue,
And force is added to the fainting crew.
Acknowledged as thou art, accept my prayer,
If aught I have achieved deserve thy care:

If to my utmost power with sword and shield
I dared the death, unknowing how to yield,
And falling in my rank, still kept the field:
Then let my arms prevail, by thee sustain'd,
That Emily by conquest may be gain'd.
Have pity on my pains; nor those unknown
To Mars, which, when a lover, were his own.
Venus, the public care of all above,
Thy stubborn heart has soften'd into love:
Now, by her blandishments and powerful charms,
When yielded she lay curling in thy arms,
Ev'n by thy shame, if shame it may be call'd,
When Vulcan had thee in his net inthrall'd;
(Oh envied ignominy, sweet disgrace,
When every god that saw thee, wish'd thy place!)
By those dear pleasures, aid my arms in fight,
And make me conquer in my patron's right:
For I am young, a novice in the trade,
The fool of love, unpractised to persuade:
And want the soothing arts that catch the fair,
But, caught myself, lie struggling in the snare:
And she I love, or laughs at all my pain,
Or knows her worth too well; and pays me with disdain.
For sure I am, unless I win in arms,
To stand excluded from Emilia's charms:
Nor can my strength avail, unless, by thee
Endued with force, I gain the victory:
Then for the fire which warm'd thy generous heart,
Pity thy subject's pains, and equal smart.
So be the morrow's sweat and labour mine,
The palm and honour of the conquest thine:
Then shall the war, and stern debate, and strife
Immortal, be the business of my life;
And in thy fane, the dusty spoils among,
High on the burnish'd roof, my banner shall be hung:
Rank'd with my champions' bucklers, and below,
With arms reversed, the achievements of my foe;
And while these limbs the vital spirit feeds,
While day to night, and night to day succeeds,
Thy smoking altar shall be fat with food
Of incense, and the grateful steam of blood;
Burnt-offerings morn and evening shall be thine;
And fires eternal in thy temple shine.

This bush of yellow beard, this length of hair,
Which from my birth inviolate I bear,
Guiltless of steel, and from the razor free,
Shall fall, a plenteous crop, reserved for thee.
So may my arms with victory be blest,
I ask no more; let fate dispose the rest.
The champion ceased; there follow'd in the close
A hollow groan: a murmuring sound arose;
The rings of iron, that on the doors were hung,
Sent out a jarring sound, and harshly rung:
The bolted gates flew open at the blast,
The storm rush'd in, and Arcite stood aghast:
The flames were blown aside, yet shone they bright,
Fann'd by the wind, and gave a ruffled light.
Then from the ground a scent began to rise,
Sweet smelling as accepted sacrifice:
This omen pleased; and as the flames aspire
With odorous incense Arcite heaps the fire:
Nor wanted hymns to Mars, or heathen charms:
At length the nodding statue clash'd his arms,
And, with a sullen sound, and feeble cry,
Half sunk, and half pronounced Victory!
For this, with soul devout, he thank'd the god,
And, of success secure, return'd to his abode.
These vows thus granted, raised a strife above,
Betwixt the god of War, and queen of Love.
She, granting first, had right of time to plead;
But he had granted too, nor would recede.
Jove was for Venus; but he fear'd his wife,
And seem'd unwilling to decide the strife;
Till Saturn from his leaden throne arose,
And found a way the difference to compose:
Though sparing of his grace, to mischief bent,
He seldom does a good with good intent.
Wayward, but wise; by long experience taught,
To please both parties, for ill ends, he sought:
For this advantage age from youth has won,
As not to be outridden though outrun.
By fortune he has now to Venus trined,
And with stern Mars in Capricorn was join'd:
Of him disposing in his own abode,
He soothed the goddess, while he gull'd the god:—
Cease, daughter, to complain, and stint the strife:
Thy Palamon shall have his promised wife:

And Mars, the lord of conquest, in the fight
With palm and laurel shall adorn his knight.
Wide is my course, nor turn I to my place,
Till length of time, and move with tardy pace.
Man feels me, when I press the ethereal plains,
My hand is heavy, and the wound remains.
Mine is the shipwreck, in a watery sign;
And in an earthy, the dark dungeon mine.
Cold shivering agues, melancholy care,
And bitter blasting winds, and poison'd air,
Are mine; and wilful death, resulting from despair.
The throtling quinsey 'tis my star appoints,
And rheumatism I send to rack the joints:
When churls rebel against their native prince,
I arm their hands, and furnish the pretence;
And housing in the lion's hateful sign,
Bought senates, and deserting troops are mine.
Mine is the privy poisoning; I command
Unkindly seasons, and ungrateful land.
By me kings' palaces are push'd to ground,
And miners crush'd beneath their mines are found.
'Twas I slew Samson, when the pillar'd hall
Fell down, and crush'd the many with the fall.
My looking is the sire of pestilence,
That sweeps at once the people and the prince.
Now weep no more, but trust thy grandsire's art,
Mars shall be pleased, and thou perform thy part.
'Tis ill, though different your complexions are,
The family of heaven for men should war.
The expedient pleased, where neither lost his right;
Mars had the day, and Venus had the night.
The management they left to Chronos' care;
Now turn we to the effect, and sing the war.

In Athens all was pleasure, mirth, and play,
All proper to the spring, and sprightly May:
Which every soul inspired with such delight,
'Twas jesting all the day, and love at night.
Heaven smiled, and gladded was the heart of man;
And Venus had the world as when it first began.
At length in sleep their bodies they compose,
And dreamt the future fight, and early rose.

Now scarce the dawning day began to spring,
As at a signal given, the streets with clamours ring:
At once the crowd arose; confused and high,

Even from the heaven, was heard a shouting cry;
For Mars was early up, and roused the sky.
The gods came downward to behold the wars,
Sharpening their sights, and leaning from their stars.
The neighing of the generous horse was heard,
For battle by the busy groom prepared:
Rustling of harness, rattling of the shield,
Clattering of armour furbish'd for the field.
Crowds to the castle mounted up the street,
Battering the pavement with their coursers' feet:
The greedy sight might there devour the gold
Of glittering arms, too dazzling to behold:
And polish'd steel that cast the view aside,
And crested morions with their plumy pride.
Knights, with a long retinue of their squires
In gaudy liveries march, and quaint attires.
One laced the helm, another held the lance:
A third the shining buckler did advance.
The courser paw'd the ground with restless feet,
And snorting foam'd, and champ'd the golden bit.
The smiths and armourers on palfreys ride,
Files in their hands, and hammers at their side,
And nails for loosen'd spears, and thongs for shields provide.
The yeomen guard the streets, in seemly bands;
And clowns come crowding on, with cudgels in their hands.

The trumpets, next the gate, in order placed,
Attend the sign to sound the martial blast:
The palace-yard is fill'd with floating tides,
And the last comers bear the former to the sides.
The throng is in the midst: the common crew
Shut out, the hall admits the better few;
In knots they stand, or in a rank they walk,
Serious in aspect, earnest in their talk:
Factious, and favouring this or t' other side,
As their strong fancy or weak reason guide:
Their wagers back their wishes; numbers hold
With the fair freckled king, and beard of gold:
So vigorous are his eyes, such rays they cast,
So prominent his eagle's beak is placed.
But most their looks on the black monarch bend,
His rising muscles, and his brawn commend;
His double-biting axe, and beamy spear,
Each asking a gigantic force to rear.

All spoke as partial favour moved the mind;
And, safe themselves, at others' cost divined.
Waked by the cries, the Athenian chief arose,
The knightly forms of combat to dispose;
And passing through the obsequious guards, he sate
Conspicuous on a throne, sublime in state;
There, for the two contending knights he sent:
Arm'd cap-a-pie, with reverence low they bent:
He smiled on both, and with superior look
Alike their offer'd adoration took.
The people press on every side to see
Their awful prince, and hear his high decree.
Then signing to their heralds with his hand,
They gave his orders from their lofty stand.
Silence is thrice enjoin'd; then thus aloud
The king at arms bespeaks the knights and listening crowd:
Our sovereign lord has ponder'd in his mind
The means to spare the blood of gentle kind;
And of his grace, and inborn clemency,
He modifies his first severe decree!
The keener edge of battle to rebate,
The troops for honour fighting, not for hate,
He wills, not death should terminate their strife;
And wounds, if wounds ensue, be short of life:
But issues, ere the fight, his dread command,
That slings afar, and poniards hand to hand,
Be banish'd from the field; that none shall dare
With shorten'd sword to stab in closer war;
But in fair combat fight with manly strength,
Nor push with biting point, but strike at length;
The tourney is allow'd but one career,
Of the tough ash, with the sharp-grinded spear,
But knights unhorsed may rise from off the plain,
And fight on foot their honour to regain;
Nor, if at mischief taken, on the ground
Be slain, but prisoners to the pillar bound,
At either barrier placed; nor (captives made),
Be freed, or arm'd anew the fight invade.
The chief of either side, bereft of life,
Or yielded to his foe, concludes the strife.
Thus dooms the lord: now valiant knights and young,
Fight each his fill with swords and maces long.
The herald ends: the vaulted firmament
With loud acclaims and vast applause is rent:

Heaven guard a prince so gracious and so good,
So just, and yet so provident of blood!
This was the general cry. The trumpets sound,
And warlike symphony is heard around.
The marching troops through Athens take their way,
The great earl-marshal orders their array.
The fair from high the passing pomp behold;
A rain of flowers is from the windows roll'd.
The casements are with golden tissue spread,
And horses' hoofs, for earth, on silken tapestry tread.
The king goes midmost, and the rivals ride
In equal rank, and close his either side.
Next after these, there rode the royal wife,
With Emily, the cause and the reward of strife.
The following cavalcade, by three and three,
Proceed by titles marshall'd in degree.
Thus through the southern gate they take their way,
And at the list arrived ere prime of day.
There, parting from the king, the chiefs divide,
And wheeling east and west, before their many ride.
The Athenian monarch mounts his throne on high,
And after him the queen and Emily:
Next these, the kindred of the crown are graced
With nearer seats, and lords by ladies placed.
Scarce were they seated, when with clamours loud
In rush'd at once a rude promiscuous crowd:
The guards, and then each other overbear,
And in a moment throng the spacious theatre.
Now changed the jarring noise to whispers low,
As winds forsaking seas more softly blow;
When at the western gate, on which the car
Is placed aloft, that bears the god of war,
Proud Arcite, entering arm'd before his train,
Stops at the barrier, and divides the plain.
Red was his banner, and display'd abroad
The bloody colours of his patron god.
  At that self moment enters Palamon
The gate of Venus and the rising Sun;
Waved by the wanton winds, his banner flies,
All maiden white, and shares the people's eyes.
From east to west, look all the world around,
Two troops so match'd were never to be found;
Such bodies built for strength, of equal age,
In stature sized; so proud an equipage:

The nicest eye could no distinction make,
Where lay the advantage, or what side to take.
Thus ranged, the herald for the last proclaims
A silence, while they answer'd to their names:
For so the king decreed, to shun with care
The fraud of musters false, the common bane of war.
The tale was just, and then the gates were closed;
And chief to chief, and troop to troop opposed.
The heralds last retired, and loudly cried,—
The fortune of the field be fairly tried.
At this, the challenger with fierce defy
His trumpet sounds; the challenged makes reply:
With clangour rings the field, resounds the vaulted sky.
Their visors closed, their lances in the rest,
Or at the helmet pointed, or the crest,
They vanish from the barrier, speed the race,
And spurring see decrease the middle space.
A cloud of smoke envelops either host,
And all at once the combatants are lost:
Darkling they join adverse, and shock unseen,
Coursers with coursers joustling, men with men:
As labouring in eclipse, a while they stay,
Till the next blast of wind restores the day.
They look anew: the beauteous form of fight
Is changed, and war appears a grisly sight.
Two troops in fair array one moment show'd,
The next, a field with fallen bodies strow'd:
Not half the number in their seats are found;
But men and steeds lie grovelling on the ground.
The points of spears are stuck within the shield,
The steeds without their riders scour the field.
The knights, unhorsed, on foot renew the fight;
The glittering falchions cast a gleaming light:
Hauberks and helms are hew'd with many a wound,
Out spins the streaming blood and dyes the ground.
The mighty maces with such haste descend,
They break the bones, and make the solid armour bend.
This thrusts amid the throng with furious force;
Down goes, at once, the horseman and the horse:
That courser stumbles on the fallen steed,
And floundering throws the rider o'er his head.
One rolls along, a foot-ball to his foes;
One with a broken truncheon deals his blows.

This halting, this disabled with his wound,
In triumph led, is to the pillar bound,
Where by the king's award he must abide:
There goes a captive led on t' other side.
By fits they cease; and leaning on the lance,
Take breath a while, and to new fight advance.
Full oft the rivals met, and neither spared
His utmost force, and each forgot to ward.
The head of this was to the saddle bent,
That other backward to the crupper sent:
Both were by turns unhorsed; the jealous blows
Fall thick and heavy, when on foot they close.
So deep their falchions bite, that every stroke
Pierced to the quick; and equal wounds they gave and took.
Borne far asunder by the tides of men,
Like adamant and steel they meet again.
So when a tiger sucks the bullock's blood,
A famish'd lion issuing from the wood
Roars loudly fierce, and challenges the food.
Each claims possession, neither will obey,
But both their paws are fasten'd on the prey;
They bite, they tear; and while in vain they strive,
The swains come arm'd between, and both to distance drive.
At length, as fate foredoom'd, and all things tend
By course of time to their appointed end;
So when the sun to west was far declined,
And both afresh in mortal battle join'd,
The strong Emetrius came in Arcite's aid,
And Palamon with odds was overlaid:
For turning short, he struck with all his might
Full on the helmet of the unwary knight.
Deep was the wound; he stagger'd with the blow,
And turned him to his unexpected foe;
Whom with such force he struck, he fell'd him down,
And cleft the circle of his golden crown,
But Arcite's men, who now prevail'd in fight,
Twice ten at once surround the single knight:
O'erpower'd, at length, they force him to the ground,
Unyielded as he was, and to the pillar bound;
And king Lycurgus, while he fought in vain
His friend to free, was tumbled on the plain.
Who now laments but Palamón, compell'd
No more to try the fortune of the field!

And, worse than death, to view with hateful eyes
His rival's conquest, and renounce the prize!
The royal judge on his tribunal placed,
Who had beheld the fight from first to last,
Bade cease the war; pronouncing from on high,
Arcite of Thebes had won the beauteous Emily.
The sound of trumpets to the voice replied,
And round the royal lists the heralds cried,—
Arcite of Thebes has won the beauteous bride!
The people rend the skies with vast applause;
All own the chief, when Fortune owns the cause.
Arcite is own'd e'en by the gods above,
And conquering Mars insults the Queen of Love
So laugh'd he, when the rightful Titan fail'd,
And Jove's usurping arms in heaven prevail'd.
Laugh'd all the powers who favour tyranny;
And all the standing army of the sky.
But Venus with dejected eyes appears,
And weeping on the lists distill'd her tears;
Her will refused, which grieves a woman most,
And, in her champion foil'd, the cause of Love is lost.
Till Saturn said, Fair daughter, now be still,
The blustering fool has satisfied his will;
His boon is given; his knight has gain'd the day,
But lost the prize, the arrears are yet to pay.
Thy hour is come, and mine the care shall be
To please thy knight, and set thy promise free.
Now while the heralds run the lists around,
And Arcite! Arcite! heaven and earth resound;
A miracle (nor less it could be call'd)
Their joy with unexpected sorrow pall'd.
The victor knight had laid his helm aside,
Part for his ease, the greater part for pride:
Bare-headed, popularly low he bow'd,
And paid the salutations of the crowd.
Then spurring at full speed, ran endlong on
Where Theseus sate on his imperial throne;
Furious he drove, and upward cast his eye,
Where next the queen was placed his Emily;
Then passing, to the saddle-bow he bent:
A sweet regard the gracious virgin lent;
(For women, to the brave an easy prey,
Still follow Fortune where she leads the way:)

Just then, from earth sprung out a flashing fire,
By Pluto sent, at Saturn's bad desire:
The startling steed was seized with sudden fright,
And, bounding, o'er the pommel cast the knight:
Forward he flew, and pitching on his head,
He quiver d with his feet, and lay for dead.
Black was his countenance in a little space,
For all the blood was gather'd in his face.
Help was at hand: they rear'd him from the ground,
And from his cumbrous arms his limbs unbound;
Then lanced a vein, and watch'd returning breath;
It came, but clogg'd with symptoms of his death.
The saddle-bow the noble parts had press'd,
All bruised and mortified his manly breast.
Him still entranced, and in a litter laid,
They bore from field, and to his bed convey'd.
At length he waked, and with a feeble cry,
The word he first pronounced, was—Emily!
Meantime the king, though inwardly he mourn'd,
In pomp triumphant to the town return'd,
Attended by the chiefs, who fought the field;
(Now friendly mix'd, and in one troop compell'd):
Composed his looks to counterfeited cheer,
And bade them not for Arcite's life to fear.
But that which gladded all the warrior train,
Though most were sorely wounded, none were slain.
The surgeons soon despoil'd 'em of their arms,
And some with salves they cure, and some with charms;
Foment the bruises, and the pains assuage,
And heal their inward hurts with sovereign draughts of sage.
The king in person visits all around,
Comforts the sick, congratulates the sound;
Honours the princely chiefs, rewards the rest,
And holds for thrice three days a royal feast.
None was disgraced; for falling is no shame;
And cowardice alone is loss of fame.
The vent'rous knight is from the saddle thrown,
But 'tis the fault of fortune, not his own;
If crowds and palms the conquering side adorn,
The victor under better stars was born:
The brave man seeks not popular applause,
Nor overpower'd with arms deserts his cause;
Unshamed, though foil'd, he does the best he can;
Force is of brutes, but honour is of man.

Thus Theseus smiled on all with equal grace,
And each was set according to his place;
With ease were reconciled the differing parts,
For envy never dwells in noble hearts.
At length they took their leave, the time expired;
Well pleased, and to their several homes retired.
Meanwhile the health of Arcite still impairs;
From bad proceeds to worse, and mocks the leeches' cares;
Swoll'n is his breast; his inward pains increase,
All means are used, and all without success.
The clotted blood lies heavy on his heart,
Corrupts, and there remains in spite of art:
Nor breathing veins, nor cupping will prevail;
All outward remedies and inward fail:
The mould of nature's fabric is destroy'd,
Her vessels discomposed, her virtue void:
The bellows of his lungs begin to swell:
All out of frame is every secret cell,
Nor can the good receive, nor bad expel.
Those breathing organs, thus within oppress'd,
With venom soon distend the sinews of his breast.
Nought profits him to save abandon'd life,
Nor vomit's upward aid, nor downward laxative.
The midmost region batter'd and destroy'd,
When nature cannot work, the effect of art is void.
For physic can but mend our crazy state,
Patch an old building, not a new create.
Arcite is doom'd to die in all his pride,
Must leave his youth, and yield his beauteous bride,
Gain'd hardly, against right, and unenjoy'd.
When 'twas declared all hope of life was past,
Conscience (that of all physic works the last)
Caused him to send for Emily in haste.
With her, (at his desire,) came Palamon;
Then on his pillow raised, he thus begun:—
No language can express the smallest part
Of what I feel, and suffer in my heart,
For you, whom best I love and value most;
But to your service I bequeath my ghost;
Which from this mortal body when untied,
Unseen, unheard, shall hover at your side;
Nor fright you waking, nor your sleep offend,
But wait officious, and your steps attend:

How I have loved, excuse my faltering tongue,
My spirits feeble, and my pains are strong:
This I may say, I only grieve to die,
Because I lose my charming Emily:
To die, when Heaven had put you in my power,
Fate could not choose a more malicious hour!
What greater curse could envious Fortune give,
Than just to die, when I began to live!
Vain men, how vanishing a bliss we crave,
Now warm in love, now withering in the grave!
Never, oh, never more to see the sun!
Still dark, in a damp vault, and still alone!
This fate is common; but I lose my breath
Near bliss, and yet not bless'd before my death.
Farewell; but take me dying in your arms,
'Tis all I can enjoy of all your charms:
This hand I cannot but in death resign;
Ah! could I live! but while I live 'tis mine.
I feel my end approach, and thus embraced,
Am pleased to die; but hear me speak my last:
Ah! my sweet foe, for you, and you alone,
I broke my faith with injured Palamon.
But love the sense of right and wrong confounds,
Strong love and proud ambition have no bounds.
And much I doubt, should Heaven my life prolong,
I should return to justify my wrong:
For while my former flames remain within,
Repentance is but want of power to sin.
With mortal hatred I pursued his life,
Nor he, nor you, were guilty of the strife;
Nor I, but as I loved; yet all combined,
Your beauty, and my impotence of mind;
And his concurrent flame, that blew my fire;
For still our kindred souls had one desire.
He had a moment's right in point of time;
Had I seen first, then his had been the crime.
Fate made it mine, and justified his right;
Nor holds this earth a more deserving knight,
For virtue, valour, and for noble blood,
Truth, honour, all that is comprised in good;
So help me Heaven, in all the world is none
So worthy to be loved as Palamon.
He loves you too, with such an holy fire,
As will not, cannot, but with life expire:

Our vow'd affections both have often tried,
Nor any love but yours could ours divide.
Then, by my love's inviolable band,
By my long suffering, and my short command,
If e'er you plight your vows when I am gone,
Have pity on the faithful Palamon.
This was his last; for Death came on amain,
And exercised below his iron reign;
Then upward to the seat of life he goes:
Sense fled before him, what he touch'd he froze:
Yet could he not his closing eyes withdraw,
Though less and less of Emily he saw;
So, speechless, for a little space he lay;
Then grasp'd the hand he held, and sigh'd his soul away.
But whither went his soul, let such relate
Who search the secrets of the future state:
Divines can say but what themselves believe;
Strong proofs they have, but not demonstrative:
For, were all plain, then all sides must agree,
And faith itself be lost in certainty.
To live uprightly then is sure the best,
To save ourselves, and not to damn the rest.
The soul of Arcite went where heathens go,
Who better live than we, though less they know.
In Palamon a manly grief appears;
Silent, he wept, ashamed to show his tears:
Emilia shriek'd but once, and then, oppress'd
With sorrow, sunk upon her lover's breast:
Till Theseus in his arms convey'd with care,
Far from so sad a sight, the swooning fair.
'Twere loss of time her sorrow to relate;
Ill bears the sex a youthful lover's fate,
When just approaching to the nuptial state.
But like a low-hung cloud, it rains so fast,
That all at once it falls, and cannot last.
The face of things is changed, and Athens now,
That laugh'd so late, becomes the scene of woe:
Matrons and maids, both sexes, every state,
With tears lament the knight's untimely fate.
Nor greater grief in falling Troy was seen
For Hector's death; but Hector was not then.
Old men with dust deform'd their hoary hair,
The women beat their breasts, their cheeks they tare.

Why would'st thou go, with one consent they cry,
When thou hadst gold enough, and Emily?
Theseus himself, who should have cheer'd the grief
Of others, wanted now the same relief;
Old Egeus only could revive his son,
Who various changes of the world had known,
And strange vicissitudes of human fate,
Still altering, never in a steady state;
Good after ill, and, after pain, delight;
Alternate like the scenes of day and night:
Since every man, who lives, is born to die,
And none can boast sincere felicity,
With equal mind, what happens, let us bear,
Nor joy nor grieve too much for things beyond our care.
Like pilgrims to the appointed place we tend;
The world's an inn, and death the journey's end.
Even kings but play; and when their part is done,
Some other, worse or better, mount the throne.—
With words like these the crowd was satisfied,
And so they would have been, had Theseus died.
But he, their king, was labouring in his mind,
A fitting place for funeral pomps to find,
Which were in honour of the dead design'd.
And after long debate, at last he found
(As love itself had mark'd the spot of ground)
That grove for ever green, that conscious laund,
Where he with Palamon fought hand to hand:
That where he fell his amorous desires
With soft complaints, and felt his hottest fires,
There other flames might waste his earthly part,
And burn his limbs, where love had burn'd his heart.
This once resolved, the peasants were enjoin'd
Sere-wood, and firs, and dodder'd oaks to find.
With sounding axes to the grove they go,
Fell, split, and lay the fuel on a row,
Vulcanian food: a bier is next prepared,
On which the lifeless body should be rear'd,
Cover'd with cloth of gold, on which was laid
The corpse of Arcite, in like robes array'd.
White gloves were on his hands, and on his head
A wreath of laurel, mix'd with myrtle, spread.
A sword keen-edged within his right he held,
The warlike emblem of the conquer'd field:

Bare with his manly visage on the bier:
Menaced his countenance, even in death severe.
Then to the palace-hall they bore the knight,
To lie in solemn state, a public sight.
Groans, cries, and howlings fill the crowded place,
And unaffected sorrow sat on every face.
Sad Palamon above the rest appears,
In mourning garments, dew'd with gushing tears:
His auburn locks on either shoulder flow'd,
Which to the funeral of his friend he vow'd:
But Emily, as chief, was next his side,
A virgin-widow, and a mourning bride.
And that the princely obsequies might be
Perform'd according to his high degree,
The steed, that bore him living to the fight,
Was trapp'd with polish'd steel, all shining bright,
And cover'd with the achievements of the knight.
The riders rode abreast, and one his shield,
His lance of cornel-wood another held;
The third his bow, and, glorious to behold,
The costly quiver, all of burnish'd gold.
The noblest of the Grecians next appear,
And, weeping, on their shoulders bore the bier;
With sober pace they march'd, and often staid,
And through the master-street the corpse convey'd.
The houses to their tops with black were spread,
And even the pavements were with mourning hid.
The right side of the pall old Egeus kept,
And on the left the royal Theseus wept;
Each bore a golden bowl, of work divine,
With honey fill'd, and milk, and mix'd with ruddy wine.
Then Palamon, the kinsman of the slain,
And after him appear'd the illustrious train.
To grace the pomp, came Emily the bright,
With cover'd fire, the funeral pile to light.
With high devotion was the service made,
And all the rites of pagan honour paid:
So loftly was the pile, a Parthian bow,
With vigour drawn, must send the shaft below.
The bottom was full twenty fathom broad,
With crackling straw beneath in due proportion strow'd.
The fabric seem'd a wood of rising green,
With sulphur and bitumen cast between,

To feed the flames: the trees were unctuous fir,
And mountain-ash, the mother of the spear;
The mourner yew, and builder oak were there:
The beech, the swimming alder, and the plane,
Hard box, and linden of a softer grain,
And laurels, which the gods for conquering chiefs ordain.
How they were rank'd, shall rest untold by me,
With nameless Nymphs that lived in every tree;
Nor how the Dryads, or the woodland train,
Disherited, ran howling o'er the plain:
Nor how the birds to foreign seats repair'd,
Or beasts, that bolted out, and saw the forest bared:
Nor how the ground, now clear'd, with ghastly fright
Beheld the sudden sun, a stranger to the light.
The straw, as first I said, was laid below:
Of chips and sere-wood was the second row;
The third of greens, and timber newly fell'd;
The fourth high stage the fragrant odours held,
And pearls, and precious stones, and rich array,
In midst of which, embalm'd, the body lay.
The service sung, the maid with mourning eyes
The stubble fired; the smouldering flames arise:
This office done, she sunk upon the ground;
But what she spoke, recover'd from her swound,
I want the wit in moving words to dress;
But by themselves the tender sex may guess.
While the devouring fire was burning fast,
Rich jewels in the flame the wealthy cast;
And some their shields, and some their lances threw,
And gave their warrior's ghost a warrior's due.
Full bowls of wine, of honey, milk, and blood,
Were pour'd upon the pile of burning wood,
And hissing flames receive, and hungry lick the food.
Then thrice the mounted squadrons ride around
The fire, and Arcite's name they thrice resound:
Hail! and farewell! they shouted thrice amain,
Thrice facing to the left, and thrice they turn'd again:
Still as they turn'd, they beat their clattering shields;
The women mix their cries; and clamour fills the fields.
The warlike wakes continued all the night,
And funeral games were play'd at new returning light;
Who naked wrestled best, besmear'd with oil,
Or who with gauntlets gave or took the foil,

I will not tell you, nor would you attend;
But briefly haste to my long story's end.
I pass the rest; the year was fully mourn'd,
And Palamon long since to Thebes return'd:
When by the Grecians' general consent,
At Athens Theseus held his parliament:
Among the laws that pass'd, it was decreed,
That conquer'd Thebes from bondage should be freed;
Reserving homage to the Athenian throne,
To which the sovereign summon'd Palamon.
Unknowing of the cause, he took his way,
Mournful in mind, and still in black array.
The monarch mounts the throne, and, placed on high,
Commands into the court the beauteous Emily:
So call'd, she came; the senate rose, and paid
Becoming reverence to the royal maid.
And first, soft whispers through the assembly went:
With silent wonder then they watch'd the event:
All hush'd, the king arose with awful grace,
Deep thought was in his breast, and counsel in his face.
At length he sigh'd; and having first prepared
The attentive audience, thus his will declared.—
The Cause and Spring of motion, from above,
Hung down on earth the golden chain of Love:
Great was the effect, and high was his intent,
When peace among the jarring seeds he sent.
Fire, flood, and earth, and air, by this were bound,
And Love, the common link, the new creation crown'd.
The chain still holds; for though the forms decay,
Eternal matter never wears away:
The same first Mover certain bounds has placed,
How long those perishable forms shall last:
Nor can they last beyond the time assign'd
By that all-seeing and all-making mind:
Shorten their hours they may; for will is free;
But never pass the appointed destiny.
So men oppress'd, when weary of their breath,
Throw off the burden, and suborn their death.
Then since those forms begin, and have their end,
On some unalter'd cause they sure depend:
Parts of the whole are we; but God the whole:
Who gives us life, and animating soul.
For nature cannot from a part derive
That being, which the whole can only give:

He perfect, stable; but imperfect we,
Subject to change, and different in degree;
Plants, beasts, and man; and, as our organs are,
We more or less of his perfection share.
But by a long descent, the ethereal fire
Corrupts; and forms, the mortal part, expire:
As he withdraws his virtue, so they pass,
And the same matter makes another mass:
This law the Omniscient Power was pleased to give,
That every kind should by succession live:
That individuals die, his will ordains;
The propagated species still remains.
The monarch oak, the patriarch of the trees,
Shoots rising up, and spreads by slow degrees;
Three centuries he grows, and three he stays,
Supreme in state, and in three more decays;
So wears the paving pebble in the street,
And towns and towers their fatal periods meet:
So rivers, rapid once, now naked lie,
Forsaken of their springs; and leave their channels dry.
So man, at first a drop, dilates with heat,
Then, form'd, the little heart begins to beat;
Secret he feeds, unknowing in the cell;
At length, for hatching ripe, he breaks the shell,
And struggles into breath, and cries for aid;
Then, helpless, in his mother's lap is laid.
He creeps, he walks, and issuing into man,
Grudges their life, from whence his own began;
Reckless of laws, affects to rule alone,
Anxious to reign, and restless on the throne:
First vegetive, then feels, and reasons last;
Rich of three souls, and lives all three to waste.
Some thus; but thousands more in flower of age:
For few arrive to run the latter stage.
Sunk in the first, in battle some are slain,
And others, whelm'd beneath the stormy main.
What makes all this, but Jupiter the king,
At whose command we perish, and we spring?
Then 'tis our best, since thus ordained to die,
To make a virtue of necessity;
Take what he gives, since to rebel is vain;
The bad grows better, which we well sustain;
And could we choose the time, and choose aright,
'Tis best to die, our honour at the height.

When we have done our ancestors no shame,
But served our friends, and well secured our fame;
Then should we wish our happy life to close,
And leave no more for fortune to dispose:
So should we make our death a glad relief
From future shame, from sickness, and from grief:
Enjoying while we live the present hour,
And dying in our excellence and flower.
Then round our death-bed every friend should run,
And joyous of our conquest early won:
While the malicious world with envious tears
Should grudge our happy end, and wish it theirs.
Since then our Arcite is with honour dead,
Why should we mourn, that he so soon is freed,
Or call untimely, what the gods decreed?
With grief as just, a friend may be deplored,
From a foul prison to free air restored.
Ought he to thank his kinsman or his wife,
Could tears recall him into wretched life?
Their sorrow hurts themselves; on him is lost;
And worse than both, offends his happy ghost.
What then remains, but, after past annoy,
To take the good vicissitude of joy?
To thank the gracious gods for what they give,
Possess our souls, and while we live, to live?
Ordain we then two sorrows to combine,
And in one point the extremes of grief to join;
That thence resulting joy may be renew'd,
As jarring notes in harmony conclude.
Then I propose that Palamon shall be
In marriage join'd with beauteous Emily;
For which already I have gain'd the assent
Of my free people in full parliament.
Long love to her has borne the faithful knight,
And well deserved, had Fortune done him right:
'Tis time to mend her fault; since Emily
By Arcite's death from former vows is free:
If you, fair sister, ratify the accord,
And take him for your husband and your lord,
'Tis no dishonour to confer your grace
On one descended from a royal race:
And were he less, yet years of service past
From grateful souls exact reward at last;

Pity is Heaven's and your's; nor can she find
A throne so soft as in a woman's mind.
He said;—she blush'd; and as o'eraw'd by might,
Seem'd to give Theseus, what she gave the knight.
Then turning to the Theban thus he said;
Small arguments are needful to persuade
Your temper to comply with my command;
And speaking thus, he gave Emilia's hand.
Smiled Venus, to behold her own true knight
Obtain the conquest, though he lost the fight,
And bless'd with nuptial bliss the sweet laborious night.
Eros, and Anteros, on either side,
One fired the bridegroom, and one warm'd the bride;
And long-attending Hymen, from above,
Shower'd on the bed the whole Idalian grove.
All of a tenor was their after-life,
No day discolour'd with domestic strife;
No jealousy, but mutual truth believed,
Secure repose, and kindness undeceived.
Thus Heaven, beyond the compass of his thought,
Sent him the blessing he so dearly bought.
So may the Queen of Love long duty bless,
And all true lovers find the same success.

THE COCK AND THE FOX;

OR, THE TALE OF THE NUN'S PRIEST.

THERE lived, as authors tell, in days of yore,
A widow somewhat old, and very poor:
Deep in a cell her cottage lonely stood,
Well thatch'd, and under covert of a wood.
This dowager, on whom my tale I found,
Since last she laid her husband in the ground,
A simple sober life, in patience, led,
And had but just enough to buy her bread;
But h'uswifing the little Heaven had lent,
She duly paid a groat for quarter rent;
And pinch'd her belly, with her daughters two,
To bring the year about with much ado.

The cattle in her homestead were three sows,
An ewe call'd Mally, and three brinded cows.
Her parlour-window stuck with herbs around,
Of savoury smell; and rushes strew'd the ground.
A maple-dresser in her hall she had,
On which full many a slender meal she made;
For no delicious morsel pass'd her throat;
According to her cloth she cut her coat:
No poignant sauce she knew, nor costly treat,
Her hunger gave a relish to her meat:
A sparing diet did her health assure;
Or sick, a pepper posset was her cure.
Before the day was done, her work she sped,
And never went by candle-light to bed:
With exercise she sweat ill humours out,
Her dancing was not hinder'd by the gout.
Her poverty was glad; her heart content,
Nor knew she what the spleen or vapours meant.
Of wine she never tasted through the year,
But white and black was all her homely cheer:
Brown bread, and milk, (but first she skimm'd her bowls)
And bacon rashers singed upon the coals.
On holy days an egg, or two at most;
But her ambition never reach'd to roast.
A yard she had with pales enclosed about,
Some high, some low, and a dry ditch without.
Within this homestead lived, without a peer,
For crowing loud, the noble Chanticleer;
So hight her cock, whose singing did surpass
The merry notes of organs at the mass.
More certain was the crowing of the cock
To number hours, than is an abbey-clock;
And sooner than the matin-bell was rung,
He clapp'd his wings upon his roost, and sung:
For when degrees fifteen ascended right,
By sure instinct he knew 'twas one at night.
High was his comb, and coral-red withal,
In dents embattled like a castle wall;
His bill was raven-black, and shone like jet;
Blue were his legs, and orient were his feet:
White were his nails, like silver to behold,
His body glittering like the burnish'd gold.
This gentle cock, for solace of his life,
Six misses had, besides his lawful wife;

Scandal, that spares no king, though ne'er so good,
Says, they were all of his own flesh and blood,
His sisters both by sire and mother's side;
And sure their likeness show'd them near allied.
But make the worst, the monarch did no more,
Than all the Ptolemys had done before:
When incest is for interest of a nation,
'Tis made no sin by holy dispensation.
Some lines have been maintain'd by this alone,
Which by their common ugliness are known.
But passing this as from our tale apart,
Dame Partlet was the sovereign of his heart:
Ardent in love, outrageous in his play,
He feather'd her a hundred times a day:
And she, that was not only passing fair,
But was withal discreet, and debonair,
Resolved the passive doctrine to fulfil,
Though loth; and let him work his wicked will:
At board and bed was affable and kind,
According as their marriage-vow did bind,
And as the Church's precept had enjoin'd.
Even since she was a se'nnight old, they say,
Was chaste and humble to her dying day,
Nor chick nor hen was known to disobey.
By this her husband's heart she did obtain;
What cannot beauty, join'd with virtue, gain!
She was his only joy, and he her pride:
She, when he walked, went pecking by his side;
If, spurning up the ground, he sprung a corn,
The tribute in his bill to her was borne.
But oh! what joy it was to hear him sing
In summer, when the day began to spring,
Stretching his neck, and warbling in his throat,
Solus cum sola, then was all his note.
For in the days of yore, the birds of parts
Were bred to speak, and sing, and learn the liberal arts.
It happ'd that perching on the parlour-beam
Amidst his wives, he had a deadly dream,
Just at the dawn; and sigh'd, and groan'd so fast,
As every breath he drew would be his last.
Dame Partlet, ever nearest to his side,
Heard all his piteous moan, and how he cried
For help from gods and men; and sore aghast
She peck'd and pull'd, and waken'd him at last.

Dear heart, said she, for love of Heaven declare
Your pain, and make me partner of your care.
You groan, Sir, ever since the morning-light,
As something had disturb'd your noble spright.
And, Madam, well I might, said Chanticleer,
Never was Shrove-tide-cock in such a fear.
Even still I run all over in a sweat,
My princely senses not recover'd yet.
For such a dream I had of dire portent,
That much I fear my body will be shent:
It bodes I shall have wars and woful strife,
Or in a loathsome dungeon end my life.
Know, dame, I dreamt within my troubled breast,
That in our yard I saw a murderous beast,
That on my body would have made arrest.
With waking eyes I ne'er beheld his fellow;
His colour was betwixt a red and yellow:
Tipp'd was his tail, and both his pricking ears
Were black; and much unlike his other hairs:
The rest, in shape a beagle's whelp throughout,
With broader forehead, and a sharper snout:
Deep in his front were sunk his glowing eyes,
That yet methinks I see him with surprise.
Reach out your hand, I drop with clammy sweat,
And lay it to my heart, and feel it beat.
Now fie for shame, quoth she, by Heaven above,
Thou hast for ever lost thy lady's love;
No woman can endure a recreant knight,
He must be bold by day, and free by night:
Our sex desires a husband or a friend,
Who can our honour and his own defend;
Wise, hardy, secret, liberal of his purse:
A fool is nauseous, but a coward worse:
No bragging coxcomb, yet no baffled knight.
How dar'st thou talk of love, and dar'st not fight?
How dar'st thou tell thy dame thou art affear'd?
Hast thou no manly heart, and hast a beard?
If aught from fearful dreams may be divined,
They signify a cock of dunghill kind.
All dreams, as in old Galen I have read,
Are from repletion and complexion bred;
From rising fumes of indigested food,
And noxious humours that infect the blood:

And sure, my lord, if I can read aright,
These foolish fancies you have had to-night,
Are certain symptoms (in the canting style)
Of boiling choler, and abounding bile;
This yellow gall that in your stomach floats,
Engenders all these visionary thoughts.
When choler overflows, then dreams are bred
Of flames, and all the family of red;
Red dragons, and red beasts, in sleep we view,
For humours are distinguish'd by their hue.
From hence we dream of wars and warlike things,
And wasps and hornets with their double wings.
Choler adust congeals our blood with fear,
Then black bulls toss us, and black devils tear.
In sanguine airy dreams aloft we bound,
With rheums oppress'd, we sink in rivers drown'd.
More I could say, but thus conclude my theme,
The dominating humour makes the dream.
Cato was in his time accounted wise,
And he condemns them all for empty lies.
Take my advice, and when we fly to ground,
With laxatives preserve your body sound,
And purge the peccant humours that abound.
I should be loth to lay you on a bier;
And though there lives no 'pothecary near,
I dare for once prescribe for your disease,
And save long bills, and a damn'd doctor's fees.
Two sovereign herbs, which I by practice know,
And both at hand (for in our yard they grow)
On peril of my soul shall rid you wholly
Of yellow choler, and of melancholy:
You must both purge and vomit; but obey,
And for the love of Heaven make no delay.
Since hot and dry in your complexion join,
Beware the sun when in a vernal sign;
For when he mounts exalted in the Ram,
If then he finds your body in a flame,
Replete with choler, I dare lay a groat,
A tertian ague is at least your lot.
Perhaps a fever (which the gods forefend)
May bring your youth to some untimely end:
And therefore, Sir, as you desire to live,
A day or two before your laxative,

Take just three worms, nor under nor above,
Because the gods unequal numbers love.
These digestives prepare you for your purge;
Of fumatory, centaury, and spurge,
And of ground-ivy add a leaf or two,
All which within our yard or garden grow.
Eat these, and be, my lord, of better cheer:
Your father's son was never born to fear.
Madam, quoth he, gra'mercy for your care,
But Cato, whom you quoted, you may spare:
'Tis true, a wise and worthy man he seems,
And (as you say) gave no belief to dreams:
But other men of more authority,
And, by the immortal powers, as wise as he,
Maintain, with sounder sense, that dreams forebode;
For Homer plainly says they come from God.
Nor Cato said it: but some modern fool
Imposed in Cato's name on boys at school.
Believe me, Madam, morning dreams foreshow
The events of things, and future weal or woe:
Some truths are not by reason to be tried,
But we have sure experience for our guide.
An ancient author, equal with the best,
Relates this tale of dreams among the rest.
Two friends or brothers, with devout intent,
On some far pilgrimage together went.
It happen'd so that, when the sun was down,
They just arrived by twilight at a town:
That day had been the baiting of a bull,
'Twas at a feast, and every inn so full,
That no void room in chamber, or on ground,
And but one sorry bed was to be found;
And that so little it would hold but one,
Though till this hour they never lay alone.
So were they forced to part; one stay'd behind,
His fellow sought what lodging he could find:
At last he found a stall where oxen stood,
And that he rather chose than lie abroad.
'Twas in a farther yard without a door;
But, for his ease, well litter'd was the floor.
His fellow, who the narrow bed had kept,
Was weary, and without a rocker slept:
Supine he snored; but, in the dead of night,
He dreamt his friend appear'd before his sight,

Who, with a ghastly look and doleful cry,
Said, Help me, brother, or this night I die:
Arise, and help, before all help be vain,
Or in an ox's stall I shall be slain.
Roused from his rest he waken'd in a start,
Shivering with horror, and with aching heart;
At length to cure himself by reason tries;
'Tis but a dream, and what are dreams but lies?
So thinking changed his side, and closed his eyes.
His dream returns; his friend appears again:
The murderers come; now help, or I am slain:
'Twas but a vision still, and visions are but vain.
He dreamt the third; but now his friend appear'd
Pale, naked, pierced with wounds, with blood besmear'd:
Thrice warn'd, awake! said he; relief is late,
The deed is done; but thou revenge my fate!
Tardy of aid, unseal thy heavy eyes,
Awake, and with the dawning day arise:
Take to the western-gate thy ready way,
For by that passage they my corpse convey:
My corpse is in a tumbril laid, among
The filth and ordure, and enclosed with dung.
That cart arrest, and raise a common cry;
For sacred hunger of my gold I die:
Then show'd his grisly wounds: and last he drew
A piteous sigh; and took a long adieu.
The frighted friend arose by break of day,
And found the stall where late his fellow lay.
Then of his impious host inquiring more,
Was answer'd that his guest was gone before:
Muttering he went, said he, by morning-light,
And much complain'd of his ill rest by night.
This raised suspicion in the pilgrim's mind;
Because all hosts are of an evil kind,
And oft to share the spoil with robbers join'd.
His dream confirm'd his thought; with troubled look
Straight to the western-gate his way he took;
There, as his dream foretold, a cart he found,
That carried compost forth to dung the ground.
This when the pilgrim saw, he stretch'd his throat,
And cried out murder with a yelling note.
My murder'd fellow in this cart lies dead,
Vengeance and justice on the villain's head;

You, magistrates, who sacred laws dispense,
On you I call to punish this offence.
The word thus given; within a little space,
The mob came roaring out, and throng'd the place.
All in a trice they cast the cart to ground,
And in the dung the murder'd body found;
Though breathless, warm, and reeking from the wound.
Good Heaven, whose darling attribute we find
Is boundless grace, and mercy to mankind,
Abhors the cruel; and the deeds of night
By wondrous ways reveals in open light:
Murder may pass unpunish'd for a time,
But tardy justice will o'ertake the crime.
And oft a speedier pain the guilty feels,
The hue and cry of Heaven pursues him at the heels,
Fresh from the fact; as in the present case,
The criminals are seized upon the place:
Carter and host confronted face to face.
Stiff in denial, as the law appoints,
On engines they distend their tortured joints:
So was confession forced, the offence was known,
And public justice on the offenders done.
Here may you see that visions are to dread;
And in the page that follows this, I read
Of two young merchants, whom the hope of gain
Induced in partnership to cross the main:
Waiting till willing winds their sails supplied,
Within a trading-town they long abide,
Full fairly situate on a haven's side.
One evening it befel, that looking out,
The wind they long had wish'd was come about:
Well pleased they went to rest; and if the gale
Till morn continued, both resolved to sail.
But as together in a bed they lay,
The younger had a dream at break of day.
A man he thought stood frowning at his side:
Who warn'd him for his safety to provide,
Nor put to sea, but safe on shore abide.
I come, thy genius, to command thy stay;'
Trust not the winds, for fatal is the day,
And death unhoped attends the watery way.
The vision said; and vanish'd from his sight:
The dreamer waken'd in a mortal fright;

Then pull'd his drowsy neighbour, and declared
What in his slumber he had seen and heard.
His friend smiled scornful, and with proud contempt
Rejects as idle what his fellow dreamt.
Stay, who will stay: for me no fears restrain,
Who follow Mercury the god of gain;
Let each man do as to his fancy seems,
I wait, not I, till you have better dreams.
Dreams are but interludes which fancy makes;
When monarch reason sleeps, this mimic wakes:
Compounds a medley of disjointed things,
A mob of cobblers, and a court of kings:
Light fumes are merry, grosser fumes are sad:
Both are the reasonable soul run mad:
And many monstrous forms in sleep we see,
That neither were, nor are, nor e'er can be.
Sometimes forgotten things long cast behind
Rush forward in the brain, and come to mind.
The nurse's legends are for truths received,
And the man dreams but what the boy believed.
Sometimes we but rehearse a former play,
The night restores our actions done by day;
As hounds in sleep will open for their prey.
In short the farce of dreams is of a piece,
Chimeras all; and more absurd, or less:
You, who believe in tales, abide alone;
Whate'er I get this voyage, is my own.
Thus while he spake, he heard the shouting crew
That call'd aboard, and took his last adieu.
The vessel went before a merry gale,
And for quick passage put on every sail:
But when least fear'd, and even in open day,
The mischief overtook her in the way:
Whether she sprung a leak, I cannot find,
Or whether she was overset with wind,
Or that some rock below her bottom rent;
But down at once with all her crew she went:
Her fellow-ships from far her loss descried;
But only she was sunk, and all were safe beside.
By this example you are taught again,
That dreams and visions are not always vain:
But if, dear Partlet, you are still in doubt,
Another tale shall make the former out.

Kenelm, the son of Kenulph, Mercia's king,
Whose holy life the legends loudly sing,
Warn'd in a dream, his murder did foretel
From point to point as after it befel:
All circumstances to his nurse he told,
(A wonder, from a child of seven years old:)
The dream with horror heard, the good old wife
From treason counsell'd him to guard his life;
But close to keep the secret in his mind,
For a boy's vision small belief would find.
The pious child, by promise bound, obey'd,
Nor was the fatal murder long delay'd:
By Quenda slain, he fell before his time,
Made a young martyr by his sister's crime.
The tale is told by venerable Bede,
Which, at your better leisure, you may read.
Macrobius, too, relates the vision sent
To the great Scipio, with the famed event:
Objections makes, but after makes replies,
And adds, that dreams are often prophecies.
Of Daniel, you may read in holy writ,
Who, when the king his vision did forget,
Could word for word the wondrous dream repeat.
Nor less of patriarch Joseph understand,
Who by a dream enslaved the Egyptian land,
The years of plenty and of dearth foretold,
When, for their bread, their liberty they sold.
Nor must the exalted butler be forgot,
Nor he whose dream presaged his hanging lot.
And did not Crœsus the same death foresee,
Raised in his vision on a lofty tree?
The wife of Hector, in his utmost pride,
Dreamt of his death the night before he died;
Well was he warn'd from battle to refrain,
But men to death decreed are warn'd in vain:
He dared the dream, and by his fatal foe was slain.
Much more I know, which I forbear to speak,
For see the ruddy day begins to break;
Let this suffice, that plainly I foresee
My dream was bad, and bodes adversity:
But neither pills nor laxatives I like,
They only serve to make the well-man sick:
Of these his gain the sharp physician makes,
And often gives a purge, but seldom takes:

They not correct, but poison all the blood,
And ne'er did any but the doctors good.
Their tribe, trade, trinkets, I defy them all;
With every work of 'pothecary's hall.
These melancholy matters I forbear:
  But let me tell thee, Partlet mine, and swear,
That when I view the beauties of thy face,
I fear not death, nor dangers, nor disgrace:
So may my soul have bliss, as when I spy
The scarlet red about thy partridge eye,
While thou art constant to thy own true knight,
While thou art mine, and I am thy delight,
All sorrows at thy presence take their flight.
For true it is, as in principio,
Mulier est hominis confusio.
Madam, the meaning of this Latin is,
That woman is to man his sovereign bliss.
For when by night I feel your tender side,
Though for the narrow perch I cannot ride,
Yet I have such a solace in my mind,
That all my boding cares are cast behind;
And even already I forget my dream:—
He said, and downward flew from off the beam.
For day-light now began apace to spring,
The thrush to whistle, and the lark to sing.
Then crowing clapp'd his wings, the appointed call,
To chuck his wives together in the hall.
  By this the widow had unbarr'd the door,
And Chanticleer went strutting out before,
With royal courage, and with heart so light,
As show'd he scorn'd the visions of the night.
Now roaming in the yard, he spurn'd the ground,
And gave to Partlet the first grain he found.
Then often feather'd her with wanton play,
And trod her twenty times ere prime of day:
And took by turns and gave so much delight,
Her sisters pined with envy at the sight.
He chuck'd again, when other corns he found,
And scarcely deign'd to set a foot to ground.
But swagger'd like a lord about his hall,
And his seven wives came running at his call.
  'Twas now the month in which the world began,
(If March beheld the first created man:)

And since the vernal equinox, the sun,
In Aries twelve degrees, or more, had run;
When casting up his eyes against the light,
Both month, and day, and hour he measured right;
And told more truly than the Ephemeris:
For art may err, but nature cannot miss.
Thus numbering times and seasons in his breast,
His second crowing the third hour confess'd.
Then turning, said to Partlet, See, my dear,
How lavish nature has adorn'd the year;
How the pale primrose and blue violet spring,
And birds essay their throats disused to sing:
All these are ours; and I with pleasure see
Man strutting on two legs, and aping me:
An unfledged creature, of a lumpish frame,
Endow'd with fewer particles of flame;
Our dame sits cow'ring o'er a kitchen fire,
I draw fresh air, and nature's works admire:
And e'en this day in more delight abound,
Than, since I was an egg, I ever found.
The time shall come when Chanticleer shall wish
His words unsaid, and hate his boasted bliss:
The crested bird shall by experience know,
Jove made not him his masterpiece below;
And learn the latter end of joy is woe.
The vessel of his bliss to dregs is run,
And Heaven will have him taste his other tun.
Ye wise, draw near, and hearken to my tale,
Which proves that oft the proud by flattery fall:
The legend is as true I undertake
As Tristran is, and Launcelot of the Lake:
Which all our ladies in such reverence hold,
As if in Book of Martyrs it were told.
A fox full-fraught with seeming sanctity,
That fear'd an oath, but, like the devil, would lie;
Who look'd like Lent, and had the holy leer,
And durst not sin before he said his prayer;
This pious cheat, that never suck'd the blood,
Nor chew'd the flesh of lambs,—but when he could;
Had pass'd three summers in the neighbouring wood:
And musing long, whom next to circumvent,
On Chanticleer his wicked fancy bent:
And in his high imagination cast,
By stratagem to gratify his taste.

The plot contrived, before the break of day,
Saint Reynard through the hedge had made his way;
The pale was next, but proudly with a bound
He leapt the fence of the forbidden ground:
Yet fearing to be seen, within a bed
Of coleworts he conceal'd his wily head;
Then sculk'd till afternoon, and watch'd his time,
(As murderers use) to perpetrate his crime.
O hypocrite, ingenious to destroy,
O traitor, worse than Sinon was to Troy!
O vile subverter of the Gallic reign,
More false than Gano was to Charlemagne!
O Chanticleer, in an unhappy hour
Didst thou forsake the safety of thy bower:
Better for thee thou hadst believed thy dream,
And not that day descended from the beam!
But here the doctors eagerly dispute:
Some hold predestination absolute:
Some clerks maintain, that Heaven at first foresees
And in the virtue of foresight decrees.
If this be so; then prescience binds the will,
And mortals are not free to good or ill;
For what he first foresaw, he must ordain,
Or its eternal prescience may be vain:
As bad for us as prescience had not been;
For first, or last, he 's author of the sin.
And who says that, let the blaspheming man
Say worse even of the devil, if he can.
For how can that eternal power be just
To punish man, who sins because he must?
Or how can he reward a virtuous deed,
Which is not done by us; but first decreed?
I cannot bolt this matter to the bran,
As Bradwardin and holy Austin can;
If prescience can determine actions so
That we must do, because he did foreknow,
Or that foreknowing, yet our choice is free,
Not forced to sin by strict necessity;
This strict necessity they simple call,
Another sort there is conditional.
The first so binds the will, that things foreknown
By spontaneity, not choice, are done.
Thus galley-slaves tug willing at their oar,
Content to work, in prospect of the shore;

But would not work at all, if not constrain'd before.
That other does not liberty constrain,
But man may either act, or may refrain.
Heaven made us agents free to good or ill,
And forced it not, though he foresaw the will.
Freedom was first bestow'd on human race,
And prescience only held the second place.
If he could make such agents wholly free,
I not dispute, the point 's too high for me;
For Heaven's unfathom'd power what man can sound,
Or put to his omnipotence a bound?
He made us to his image, all agree;
That image is the soul, and that must be,
Or not the Maker's image, or be free.
But whether it were better man had been
By nature bound to good, not free to sin,
I waive, for fear of splitting on a rock.
The tale I tell is only of a cock;
Who had not run the hazard of his life,
Had he believed his dream, and not his wife:
For women, with a mischief to their kind,
Pervert, with bad advice, our better mind.
A woman's counsel brought us first to woe,
And made her man his paradise forego,
Where at heart's ease he lived; and might have been
As free from sorrow as he was from sin.
For what the devil had their sex to do,
That, born to folly, they presumed to know,
And could not see the serpent in the grass?
But I myself presume, and let it pass.
Silence in times of suffering is the best,
'Tis dangerous to disturb an hornet's nest.
In other authors you may find enough,
But all they say of dames is idle stuff.
Legends of lying wits together bound,
The wife of Bath would throw 'em to the ground;
These are the words of Chanticleer, not mine,
I honour dames, and think their sex divine.
Now to continue what my tale begun:—
Lay Madame Partlet basking in the sun,
Breast-high in sand: her sisters, in a row,
Enjoy'd the beams above, the warmth below.
The cock, that of his flesh was ever free,
Sung merrier than the mermaid in the sea:

And so befel, that as he cast his eye
Among the coleworts on a butterfly,
He saw false Reynard where he lay full low:
I need not swear he had no list to crow:
But cried, cock, cock, and gave a sudden start,
As sore dismay'd and frighted at his heart.
For birds and beasts, inform'd by Nature, know
Kinds opposite to theirs, and fly their foe.
So Chanticleer, who never saw a fox,
Yet shunn'd him as a sailor shuns the rocks.
  But the false loon, who could not work his will
By open force, employ'd his flattering skill;
I hope, my lord, said he, I not offend;
Are you afraid of me, that am your friend?
I were a beast indeed to do you wrong,
I, who have loved and honour'd you so long:
Stay, gentle Sir, nor take a false alarm,
For on my soul I never meant you harm.
I come no spy, nor as a traitor press,
To learn the secrets of your soft recess:
Far be from Reynard so profane a thought,
But by the sweetness of your voice was brought:
For, as I bid my beads, by chance I heard
The song as of an angel in the yard;
A song that would have charm'd the infernal gods,
And banish'd horror from the dark abodes:
Had Orpheus sung it in the nether sphere,
So much the hymn had pleased the tyrant's ear,
The wife had been detain'd, to keep the husband there.
  My lord, your sire familiarly I knew,
A peer deserving such a son as you:
He, with your lady-mother, (whom Heaven rest)
Has often graced my house, and been my guest:
To view his living features does me good,
For I am your poor neighbour in the wood;
And in my cottage should be proud to see
The worthy heir of my friend's family.
  But since I speak of singing, let me say,
As with an upright heart I safely may,
That, save yourself, there breathes not on the ground
One like your father for a silver-sound.
So sweetly would he wake the winter-day,
That matrons to the church mistook their way,
And thought they heard the merry organ play.

And he to raise his voice with artful care,
(What will not beaux attempt to please the fair?)
On tiptoe stood to sing with greater strength,
And stretch'd his comely neck at all the length:
And while he strain'd his voice to pierce the skies,
As saints in raptures use, would shut his eyes,
That the sound striving through the narrow throat,
His winking might avail to mend the note.
By this, in song, he never had his peer,
From sweet Cecilia down to Chanticleer;
Not Maro's muse, who sung the mighty man,
Nor Pindar's heavenly lyre, nor Horace when a swan.
Your ancestors proceed from race divine:
From Brennus and Belinus is your line;
Who gave to sovereign Rome such loud alarms,
That e'en the priests were not excused from arms.
Besides, a famous monk of modern times
Has left of cocks recorded in his rhymes,
That of a parish priest the son and heir,
(When sons of priests were from the proverb clear)
Affronted once a cock of noble kind,
And either lamed his legs, or struck him blind;
For which the clerk his father was disgraced,
And in his benefice another placed.
Now sing, my lord, if not for love of me,
Yet for the sake of sweet Saint Charity;
Make hills, and dales, and earth, and heaven rejoice,
And emulate your father's angel-voice.
The cock was pleased to hear him speak so fair,
And proud beside, as solar people are;
Nor could the treason from the truth descry,
So was he ravish'd with this flattery:
So much the more, as from a little elf,
He had a high opinion of himself;
Though sickly, slender, and not large of limb,
Concluding all the world was made for him.
Ye princes, raised by poets to the gods,
And Alexander'd up in lying odes,
Believe not every flattering knave's report,
There 's many a Reynard lurking in the court;
And he shall be received with more regard,
And listen'd to, than modest truth is heard.
This Chanticleer, of whom the story sings,
Stood high upon his toes, and clapp'd his wings;

Then stretch'd his neck, and wink'd with both his eyes,
Ambitious as he sought the Olympic prize.
But while he pain'd himself to raise his note,
False Reynard rush'd, and caught him by the throat.
Then on his back he laid the precious load,
And sought his wonted shelter of the wood;
Swiftly he made his way, the mischief done,
Of all unheeded, and pursued by none.
Alas, what stay is there in human state,
Or who can shun inevitable fate?
The doom was written, the decree was pass'd,
Ere the foundations of the world were cast!
In Aries though the sun exalted stood,
His patron-planet to procure his good;
Yet Saturn was his mortal foe, and he,
In Libra raised, opposed the same degree:
The rays both good and bad, of equal power,
Each thwarting other, made a mingled hour.
On Friday morn he dreamt this direful dream,
Cross to the worthy native, in his scheme!
Ah, blissful Venus, goddess of delight,
How could'st thou suffer thy devoted knight
On thy own day to fall by foe oppress'd,
The wight of all the world who served thee best?
Who, true to love, was all for recreation,
And minded not the work of propagation.
Gaufride, who could'st so well in rhyme complain
The death of Richard with an arrow slain,
Why had not I thy muse, or thou my heart,
To sing this heavy dirge with equal art!
That I like thee on Friday might complain;
For on that day was Cœur de Lion slain.
Not louder cries, when Ilium was in flames,
Were sent to heaven by woful Trojan dames,
When Pyrrhus toss'd on high his burnish'd blade,
And offer'd Priam to his father's shade,
Than for the cock the widow'd poultry made.
Fair Partlet first, when he was borne from sight,
With sovereign shrieks bewail'd her captive knight:
Far louder than the Carthaginian wife,
When Asdrubal her husband lost his life,
When she beheld the smouldering flames ascend,
And all the Punic glories at an end:

Willing into the fires she plunged her head,
With greater ease than others seek their bed.
Not more aghast the matrons of renown,
When tyrant Nero burn'd the imperial town,
Shriek'd for the downfal in a doleful cry,
For which their guiltless lords were doom'd to die.
Now to my story I return again:
The trembling widow, and her daughters twain,
This woful cackling cry with horror heard,
Of those distracted damsels in the yard:
And starting up, beheld the heavy sight,
How Reynard to the forest took his flight,
And cross his back, as in triumphant scorn,
The hope and pillar of the house was borne.
The fox, the wicked fox! was all the cry;
Out from his house ran every neighbour nigh:
The vicar first, and after him the crew,
With forks and staves the felon to pursue.
Ran Coll our dog, and Talbot with the band,
And Malkin, with her distaff in her hand:
Ran cow and calf, and family of hogs,
In panic horror of pursuing dogs;
With many a deadly grunt and doleful squeak,
Poor swine, as if their pretty hearts would break.
The shouts of men, the women in dismay,
With shrieks augment the terror of the day.
The ducks, that heard the proclamation cried,
And fear'd a persecution might betide,
Full twenty miles from town their voyage take,
Obscure in rushes of the liquid lake.
The geese fly o'er the barn; the bees in arms
Drive headlong from their waxen cells in swarms.
Jack Straw at London-stone, with all his rout,
Struck not the city with so loud a shout;
Not when with English hate they did pursue
A Frenchman, or an unbelieving Jew:
Not when the welkin rung with "one and all;"
And echoes bounded back from Fox's hall:
Earth seem'd to sink beneath, and heaven above to fall.
With might and main they chased the murderous fox,
With brazen trumpets, and inflated box,
To kindle Mars with military sounds,
Nor wanted horns to inspire sagacious hounds.

But see how Fortune can confound the wise,
And, when they least expect it, turn the dice.
The captive-cock, who scarce could draw his breath,
And lay within the very jaws of death;
Yet in this agony his fancy wrought,
And fear supplied him with this happy thought:
Your's is the prize, victorious prince, said he,
The vicar my defeat, and all the village see.
Enjoy your friendly fortune while you may,
And bid the churls that envy you the prey,
Call back their mongrel curs, and cease their cry.
See, fools, the shelter of the wood is nigh,
And Chanticleer in your despite shall die,
He shall be pluck'd and eaten to the bone.
'Tis well advised, in faith it shall be done;
This Reynard said: but as the word he spoke,
The prisoner with a spring from prison broke:
Then stretch'd his feather'd fans with all his might,
And to the neighbouring maple wing'd his flight.
Whom when the traitor safe on tree beheld,
He cursed the gods, with shame and sorrow fill'd;
Shame for his folly, sorrow out of time,
For plotting an unprofitable crime;
Yet mastering both, the artificer of lies
Renews the assault, and his last battery tries.
Though I, said he, did ne'er in thought offend,
How justly may my lord suspect his friend?
The appearance is against me, I confess,
Who seemingly have put you in distress:
You, if your goodness does not plead my cause,
May think I broke all hospitable laws,
To bear you from your palace-yard by might,
And put your noble person in a fright:
This, since you take it ill, I must repent,
Though Heaven can witness, with no bad intent
I practised it, to make you taste your cheer
With double pleasure, first prepared by fear.
So loyal subjects often seize their prince,
Forced (for his good) to seeming violence,
Yet mean his sacred person not the least offence.
Descend! so help me Jove! as you shall find
That Reynard comes of no dissembling kind.
Nay, quoth the cock; but I beshrew us both,
If I believe a saint upon his oath:

An honest man may take a knave's advice,
But idiots only may be cozen'd twice:
Once warn'd is well bewared: Not flattering lies
Shall soothe me more to sing with winking eyes,
And open mouth, for fear of catching flies.
Who blindfold walks upon a river's brim,
When he should see, has he deserved to swim?—
Better, sir Cock, let all contention cease,
Come down, said Reynard, let us treat of peace.—
A peace with all my soul, said Chanticleer;
But, with your favour, I will treat it here:
And lest the truce with treason should be mix'd,
'Tis my concern to have the tree betwixt.

THE MORAL.

In this plain fable you the effect may see
Of negligence, and fond credulity:
And learn besides of flatterers to beware,
Then most pernicious when they speak too fair.
The cock and fox, the fool and knave imply;
The truth is moral, though the tale a lie.
Who spoke in parables, I dare not say;
But sure he knew it was a pleasing way,
Sound sense, by plain example, to convey.
And in a heathen author we may find,
That pleasure with instruction should be join'd;
So take the corn, and leave the chaff behind.

THE FLOWER AND THE LEAF:

OR, THE LADY IN THE ARBOUR. A VISION.

Now turning from the wintry signs, the sun
His course exalted through the Ram had run,
And whirling up the skies, his chariot drove
Through Taurus, and the lightsome realms of love;
Where Venus from her orb descends in showers,
To glad the ground, and paint the fields with flowers:
When first the tender blades of grass appear,
And buds, that yet the blast of Eurus fear,
Stand at the door of life, and doubt to clothe the year:

Till gentle heat, and soft repeated rains,
Make the green blood to dance within their veins:
Then, at their call, embolden'd out they come,
And swell the gems, and burst the narrow room;
Broader and broader yet, their blooms display,
Salute the welcome sun, and entertain the day.
Then from their breathing souls the sweets repair
To scent the skies, and purge the unwholesome air:
Joy spreads the heart, and, with a general song,
Spring issues out, and leads the jolly months along.
In that sweet season, as in bed I lay,
And sought in sleep to pass the night away,
I turn'd my weary side, but still in vain,
Though full of youthful health, and void of pain:
Cares I had none, to keep me from my rest,
For love had never enter'd in my breast;
I wanted nothing Fortune could supply,
Nor did she slumber till that hour deny.
I wonder'd then, but after found it true,
Much joy had dried away the balmy dew:
Seas would be pools, without the brushing air,
To curl the waves; and sure some little care
Should weary nature so, to make her want repair.
When Chanticleer the second watch had sung,
Scorning the scorner sleep, from bed I sprung;
And dressing, by the moon, in loose array,
Pass'd out in open air, preventing day,
And sought a goodly grove, as fancy led my way.
Straight as a line in beauteous order stood
Of oaks unshorn a venerable wood;
Fresh was the grass beneath, and every tree,
At distance planted in a due degree,
Their branching arms in air with equal space
Stretch'd to their neighbours with a long embrace:
And the new leaves on every bough were seen,
Some ruddy-colour'd, some of lighter green.
The painted birds, companions of the spring,
Hopping from spray to spray, were heard to sing.
Both eyes and ears received a like delight,
Enchanting music, and a charming sight.
On Philomel I fix'd my whole desire;
And listen'd for the queen of all the choir;
Fain would I hear her heavenly voice to sing;
And wanted yet an omen to the spring.

Attending long in vain, I took the way,
Which through a path, but scarcely printed, lay;
In narrow mazes oft it seem'd to meet,
And look'd, as lightly press'd by fairy feet.
Wand'ring I walk'd alone, for still methought
To some strange end so strange a path was wrought:
At last it led me where an arbour stood,
The sacred receptacle of the wood:
This place unmark'd, though oft I walk'd the green,
In all my progress I had never seen:
And seized at once with wonder and delight,
Gazed all around me, new to the transporting sight.
'Twas bench'd with turf, and goodly to be seen,
The thick young grass arose in fresher green:
The mound was newly made, no sight could pass
Betwixt the nice partitions of the grass;
The well-united sods so closely lay;
And all around the shades defended it from day:
For sycamores with eglantine were spread,
A hedge about the sides, a covering over head.
And so the fragrant brier was wove between,
The sycamore and flowers were mix'd with green,
That nature seem'd to vary the delight,
And satisfied at once the smell and sight.
The master workman of the bower was known
Through fairy-lands, and built for Oberon;
Who twining leaves with such proportion drew,
They rose by measure, and by rule they grew;
No mortal tongue can half the beauty tell:
For none but hands divine could work so well.
Both roof and sides were like a parlour made,
A soft recess, and a cold summer shade;
The hedge was set so thick, no foreign eye
The persons placed within it could espy:
But all that pass'd without with ease was seen,
As if nor fence nor tree was placed between.
'Twas border'd with a field; and some was plain
With grass, and some was sow'd with rising grain.
That (now the dew with spangles deck'd the ground)
A sweeter spot of earth was never found.
I look'd and look'd, and still with new delight;
Such joy my soul, such pleasures fill'd my sight;
And the fresh eglantine exhaled a breath,
Whose odours were of power to raise from death.

Nor sullen discontent, nor anxious care,
Even though brought thither, could inhabit there
But thence they fled as from their mortal foe;
For this sweet place could only pleasure know.
Thus as I mused, I cast aside my eye,
And saw a medlar-tree was planted nigh.
The spreading branches made a goodly show,
And full of opening blooms was every bough.
A goldfinch there I saw with gaudy pride
Of painted plumes, that hopp'd from side to side,
Still pecking as she pass'd; and still she drew
The sweets from every flower, and suck'd the dew:
Sufficed at length, she warbled in her throat,
And tuned her voice to many a merry note,
But indistinct, and neither sweet nor clear,
Yet such as sooth'd my soul, and pleased my ear.
Her short performance was no sooner tried,
When she I sought, the nightingale, replied:
So sweet, so shrill, so variously she sung,
That the grove echoed, and the valleys rung:
And I so ravish'd with her heavenly note,
I stood entranced, and had no room for thought,
But all o'erpower'd with ecstasy of bliss,
Was in a pleasing dream of paradise;
At length I waked; and looking round the bower
Search'd every tree, and pried on every flower,
If any where by chance I might espy
The rural poet of the melody:
For still methought she sung not far away;
At last I found her on a laurel spray.
Close by my side she sat, and fair in sight,
Full in a line, against her opposite;
Where stood with eglantine the laurel twined;
And both their native sweets were well conjoin'd.
On the green bank I sat, and listen'd long;
(Sitting was more convenient for the song:)
Nor till her lay was ended could I move,
But wish'd to dwell for ever in the grove.
Only methought the time too swiftly pass'd,
And every note I fear'd would be the last.
My sight, and smell, and hearing were employ'd,
And all three senses in full gust enjoy'd.
And what alone did all the rest surpass,
The sweet possession of the fairy place;

Single, and conscious to myself alone
Of pleasures to the excluded world unknown;
Pleasures which no where else were to be found,
And all Elysium in a spot of ground.
Thus while I sat intent to see and hear,
And drew perfumes of more than vital air,
All suddenly I heard the approaching sound
Of vocal music on the enchanted ground:
An host of saints it seem'd so full the choir;
As if the bless'd above did all conspire
To join their voices, and neglect the lyre.
At length there issued from the grove behind
A fair assembly of the female kind:
A train less fair, as ancient fathers tell,
Seduced the sons of heaven to rebel.
I pass their form, and every charming grace,
Less than an angel would their worth debase:
But their attire, like liveries of a kind,
All rich and rare, is fresh within my mind.
In velvet, white as snow, the troop was gown'd,
The seams with sparkling emeralds set around:
Their hoods and sleeves the same; and purfled o'er
With diamonds, pearls, and all the shining store
Of eastern pomp: their long descending train,
With rubies edged and sapphires, swept the plain:
High on their heads, with jewels richly set,
Each lady wore a radiant coronet.
Beneath the circles, all the choir was graced
With chaplets green on their fair foreheads placed.
Of laurel some, of woodbine many more;
And wreaths of Agnus castus others bore;
These last, who with those virgin-crowns were dress'd,
Appear'd in higher honour than the rest.
They danced around; but in the midst was seen
A lady of a more majestic mien;
By stature, and by beauty, mark'd their sovereign queen.
She in the midst began with sober grace;
Her servants' eyes were fix'd upon her face,
And as she moved or turn'd, her motions view'd,
Her measures kept, and step by step pursued.
Methought she trod the ground with greater grace,
With more of godhead shining in her face;
And as in beauty she surpass'd the choir,
So, nobler than the rest was her attire.

A crown of ruddy gold enclosed her brow,
Plain without pomp, and rich without a show;
A branch of Agnus castus in her hand
She bore aloft (her sceptre of command);
Admired, adored by all the circling crowd,
For wheresoe'er she turn'd her face, they bow'd:
And as she danced, a roundelay she sung,
In honour of the laurel, ever young:
She raised her voice on high, and sung so clear,
The fawns came scudding from the groves to hear:
And all the bending forest lent an ear.
At every close she made, the attending throng
Replied, and bore the burden of the song:
So just, so small, yet in so sweet a note,
It seem'd the music melted in the throat.
Thus dancing on, and singing as they danced,
They to the middle of the mead advanced,
Till round my arbour a new ring they made,
And footed it about the sacred shade.
O'erjoy'd to see the jolly troop so near,
But somewhat awed, I shook with holy fear;
Yet not so much, but that I noted well
Who did the most in song or dance excel.
Not long I had observed, when from afar
I heard a sudden symphony of war;
The neighing coursers, and the soldiers' cry,
And sounding trumps that seem'd to tear the sky:
I saw soon after this, behind the grove
From whence the ladies did in order move,
Come issuing out in arms a warrior train,
That like a deluge pour'd upon the plain:
On barbed steeds they rode in proud array,
Thick as the college of the bees in May,
When swarming o'er the dusky fields they fly,
New to the flowers, and intercept the sky.
So fierce they drove, their coursers were so fleet,
That the turf trembled underneath their feet.
To tell their costly furniture were long,
The summer's day would end before the song:
To purchase but the tenth of all their store,
Would make the mighty Persian monarch poor.
Yet what I can, I will; before the rest
The trumpets issued in white mantles dress'd:

A numerous troop, and all their heads around
With chaplets green of cerrial-oak were crown'd;
And at each trumpet was a banner bound,
Which waving in the wind display'd at large
Their masters' coat of arms, and knightly charge.
Broad were the banners, and of snowy hue,
A purer web the silk-worm never drew.
The chief about their necks the scutcheons wore,
With orient pearls and jewels powder'd o'er:
Broad were their collars too, and every one
Was set about with many a costly stone.
Next these, of kings at arms a goodly train
In proud array came prancing o'er the plain:
Their cloaks were cloth of silver mix'd with gold,
And garlands green around their temples roll'd:
Rich crowns were on their royal scutcheons placed,
With sapphires, diamonds, and with rubies graced:
And as the trumpets their appearance made,
So these in habits were alike array'd;
But with a pace more sober, and more slow;
And twenty, rank in rank, they rode a-row.
The pursuivants came next, in number more;
And like the heralds each his scutcheon bore:
Clad in white velvet all their troop they led,
With each an oaken chaplet on his head.
Nine royal knights in equal rank succeed,
Each warrior mounted on a fiery steed;
In golden armour glorious to behold;
The rivets of their arms were nail'd with gold.
Their surcoats of white ermine fur were made;
With cloth of gold between, that cast a glittering shade.
The trappings of their steeds were of the same;
The golden fringe even set the ground on flame,
And drew a precious trail: a crown divine
Of laurel did about their temples twine.
Three henchmen were for every knight assign'd,
All in rich livery clad, and of a kind;
White velvet, but unshorn, for cloaks they wore,
And each within his hand a truncheon bore:
The foremost held a helm of rare device;
A prince's ransom would not pay the price.
The second bore the buckler of his knight,
The third of cornel-wood a spear upright,
Headed with piercing steel, and polish'd bright.

Like to their lords their equipage was seen,
And all their foreheads crown'd with garlands green.
And after these came arm'd with spear and shield
An host so great as covered all the field:
And all their foreheads, like the knights before,
With laurels evergreen were shaded o'er,
Or oak, or other leaves of lasting kind,
Tenacious of the stem, and firm against the wind.
Some in their hands, beside the lance and shield,
The boughs of woodbine or of hawthorn held,
Or branches for their mystic emblems took,
Of palm, of laurel, or of cerrial-oak.
Thus marching to the trumpet's lofty sound,
Drawn in two lines adverse they wheel'd around,
And in the middle meadow took their ground.
Among themselves the tourney they divide,
In equal squadrons ranged on either side.
Then turn'd their horses' heads, and man to man,
And steed to steed opposed, the jousts began.
They lightly set their lances in the rest,
And, at the sign, against each other press'd:
They met. I sitting at my ease beheld
The mix'd events, and fortunes of the field.
Some broke their spears, some tumbled horse and man,
And round the field the lighten'd coursers ran.
An hour and more, like tides, in equal sway
They rush'd, and won by turns, and lost the day:
At length the nine (who still together held)
Their fainting foes to shameful flight compell'd,
And with resistless force o'er-ran the field.
Thus, to their fame, when finish'd was the fight,
The victors from their lofty steeds alight:
Like them dismounted all the warlike train,
And two by two proceeded o'er the plain:
Till to the fair assembly they advanced,
Who near the secret arbour sung and danced.
The ladies left their measures at the sight,
To meet the chiefs returning from the fight,
And each with open arms embraced her chosen knight.
Amid the plain a spreading laurel stood,
The grace and ornament of all the wood:
That pleasing shade they sought, a soft retreat
From sudden April showers, a shelter from the heat:

Her leafy arms with such extent were spread,
So near the clouds was her aspiring head,
That hosts of birds, that wing the liquid air,
Perch'd in the boughs, had nightly lodging there:
And flocks of sheep beneath the shade from far
Might hear the rattling hail, and wintry war;
From heaven's inclemency here found retreat,
Enjoy'd the cool, and shunn'd the scorching heat:
A hundred knights might there at ease abide;
And every knight a lady by his side:
The trunk itself such odours did bequeath,
That a Moluccan breeze to these was common breath.
The lords and ladies here, approaching, paid
Their homage, with a low obeisance made;
And seem'd to venerate the sacred shade.
These rites perform'd, their pleasures they pursue,
With songs of love, and mix with measures new;
Around the holy tree their dance they frame,
And every champion leads his chosen dame.
I cast my sight upon the farther field,
And a fresh object of delight beheld:
For from the region of the West I heard
New music sound, and a new troop appear'd;
Of knights and ladies mix'd a jolly band,
But all on foot they march'd, and hand in hand.
The ladies dress'd in richest robes were seen
Of Florence satin, flower'd with white and green,
And for a shade betwixt the bloomy gridelin.
The borders of their petticoats below
Were guarded thick with rubies on a row;
And every damsel wore upon her head
Of flowers a garland blended white and red.
Attired in mantles all the knights were seen,
That gratified the view with cheerful green:
Their chaplets of their ladies' colours were,
Composed of white and red, to shade their shining hair.
Before the merry troop the minstrels play'd;
All in their masters' liveries were array'd,
And clad in green, and on their temples wore
The chaplets white and red their ladies bore.
Their instruments were various in their kind,
Some for the bow, and some for breathing wind:
The psaltry, pipe, and hautboy's noisy band,
And the soft lute trembling beneath the touching hand.

A tuft of daisies on a flowery lay
They saw, and thitherward they bent their way;
To this both knights and dames their homage made,
And due obeisance to the daisy paid.
And then the band of flutes began to play,
To which a lady sung a virelay:
And still at every close she would repeat
The burden of the song, The daisy is so sweet.
The daisy is so sweet,—when she begun,
The troop of knights and dames continued on.
The concert and the voice so charmed my ear,
And soothed my soul, that it was heaven to hear.
But soon their pleasure pass'd: at noon of day,
The sun with sultry beams began to play:
Not Sirius shoots a fiercer flame from high,
When with his poisonous breath he blasts the sky;
Then droop'd the fading flow'rs (their beauty fled)
And closed their sickly eyes, and hung the head,
And rivell'd up with heat, lay dying in their bed.
The ladies gasp'd, and scarcely could respire;
The breath they drew, no longer air, but fire;
The fainty knights were scorch'd, and knew not where
To run for shelter, for no shade was near;
And after this the gathering clouds amain
Pour'd down a storm of rattling hail and rain:
And lightning flash'd betwixt: the field and flowers,
Burnt up before, were buried in the showers.
The ladies and the knights, no shelter nigh,
Bare to the weather and the wintry sky,
Were dropping wet, disconsolate, and wan,
And through their thin array received the rain:
While those in white, protected by the tree,
Saw pass in vain the assault, and stood from danger free,
But as compassion moved their gentle minds,
When ceased the storm, and silent were the winds,
Displeased at what, not suffering, they had seen,
They went to cheer the faction of the green:
The queen in white array, before her band,
Saluting, took her rival by the hand;
So did the knights and dames, with courtly grace,
And with behaviour sweet their foes embrace.
Then thus the queen with laurel on her brow,
Fair sister, I have suffer'd in your woe;

Nor shall be wanting aught within my power
For your relief in my refreshing bower.
That other answer'd with a lowly look,
And soon the gracious invitation took:
For ill at ease both she and all her train
The scorching sun had borne, and beating rain.
Like courtesy was used by all in white,
Each dame a dame received, and every knight a knight.
The laurel champions with their swords invade
The neighbouring forests, where the jousts were made,
And sere-wood from the rotten hedges took,
And seeds of latent fire from flints provoke:
A cheerful blaze arose, and by the fire
They warm'd their frozen feet, and dried their wet attire.
Refresh'd with heat, the ladies sought around
For virtuous herbs, which gather'd from the ground
They squeezed the juice, and cooling ointment made,
Which on their sun-burnt cheeks, and their chapt skins they laid:
Then sought green salads, which they bade them eat,
A sovereign remedy for inward heat.
The Lady of the Leaf ordain'd a feast,
And made the Lady of the Flower her guest:
When, lo! a bower ascended on the plain,
With sudden seats ordain'd, and large for either train.
This bower was near my pleasant arbour placed,
That I could hear and see whatever pass'd:
The ladies sat with each a knight between,
Distinguish'd by their colours, white and green;
The vanquish'd party with the victors join'd,
Nor wanted sweet discourse—the banquet of the mind.
Meantime, the minstrels play'd on either side,
Vain of their art, and for the mastery vied:
The sweet contention lasted for an hour,
And reach'd my secret arbour from the bower.
The sun was set; and Vesper, to supply
His absent beams, had lighted up the sky.
When Philomel, officious all the day
To sing the service of the ensuing May,
Fled from her laurel shade, and wing'd her flight
Directly to the queen array'd in white;
And hopping, sat familiar on her hand,
A new musician, and increased the band.

The goldfinch, who, to shun the scalding heat,
Had changed the medlar for a safer seat,
And hid in bushes 'scaped the bitter shower,
Now perch'd upon the Lady of the Flower;
And either songster holding out their throats,
And folding up their wings, renewed their notes:
As if all day, preluding to the fight,
They only had rehearsed, to sing by night.
The banquet ended, and the battle done,
They danced by star-light and the friendly moon:
And when they were to part, the laureate queen
Supplied with steeds the lady of the green,
Her and her train conducting on the way,
The moon to follow, and avoid the day.
This when I saw, inquisitive to know
The secret moral of the mystic show,
I started from my shade, in hopes to find
Some nymph to satisfy my longing mind:
And as my fair adventure fell, I found
A lady all in white, with laurel crown'd,
Who closed the rear, and softly paced along,
Repeating to herself the former song.
With due respect my body I inclined,
As to some being of superior kind,
And made my court according to the day,
Wishing her queen and her a happy May.
Great thanks, my daughter, with a gracious bow,
She said; and I, who much desired to know
Of whence she was, yet fearful how to break
My mind, adventured humbly thus to speak:
Madam, might I presume and not offend,
So may the stars and shining moon attend
Your nightly sports, as you vouchsafe to tell,
What nymphs they were who mortal forms excel,
And what the knights who fought in listed fields so well
To this the dame replied: Fair daughter, know,
That what you saw was all a fairy show:
And all those airy shapes you now behold
Were human bodies once, and clothed with earthly mould:
Our souls, not yet prepared for upper light,
Till doomsday wander in the shades of night;
This only holiday of all the year,
We privileged in sunshine may appear:

With songs and dance we celebrate the day,
And with due honours usher in the May.
At other times we reign by night alone,
And posting through the skies pursue the moon:
But when the moon arises, none are found;
For cruel Demogorgon walks the round,
And if he finds a fairy lag in light,
He drives the wretch before, and lashes into night.
All courteous are by kind; and ever proud
With friendly offices to help the good.
In every land we have a larger space
Than what is known to you of mortal race:
Where we with green adorn our fairy bowers,
And even this grove, unseen before, is ours.
Know farther, every lady clothed in white,
And, crown'd with oak and laurel every knight,
Are servants to the Leaf, by liveries known
Of innocence; and I myself am one.
Saw you not her so graceful to behold,
In white attire, and crown'd with radiant gold?
The sovereign lady of our land is she,
Diana call'd, the queen of chastity:
And, for the spotless name of maid she bears,
That Agnus castus in her hand appears;
And all her train, with leafy chaplets crown'd,
Were for unblamed virginity renown'd;
But those the chief and highest in command
Who bare those holy branches in their hand:
The knights adorn'd with laurel crowns are they,
Whom death nor danger ever could dismay,
Victorious names, who made the world obey:
Who, while they lived, in deeds of arms excell'd,
And after death for deities were held.
But those who wear the woodbine on their brow,
Were knights of love, who never broke their vow;
Firm to their plighted faith, and ever free
From fears, and fickle chance, and jealousy.
The lords and ladies, who the woodbine bear,
As true as Tristram and Isotta were.
But what are those, said I, the unconquer'd nine,
Who crown'd with laurel wreaths in golden armour shine?
And who the knights in green, and what the train
Of ladies dress'd with daisies on the plain?

Why both the bands in worship disagree,
And some adore the flower, and some the tree?
Just is your suit, fair daughter, said the dame:
Those laurell'd chiefs were men of mighty fame;
Nine worthies were they call'd of different rites,
Three Jews, three Pagans, and three Christian knights.
These, as you see, ride foremost in the field,
As they the foremost rank of honour held,
And all in deeds of chivalry excell'd:
Their temples wreath'd with leaves, that still renew;
For deathless laurel is the victor's due:
Who bear the bows were knights in Arthur's reign,
Twelve they, and twelve the peers of Charlemagne:
For bows the strength of brawny arms imply,
Emblems of valour and of victory.
Behold an order yet of newer date,
Doubling their number, equal in their state;
Our England's ornament, the crown's defence,
In battle brave, protectors of their prince:
Unchanged by fortune, to their sovereign true,
For which their manly legs are bound with blue.
These, of the Garter call'd, of faith unstain'd
In fighting fields the laurel have obtain'd,
And well repaid the honours which they gain'd.
The laurel wreaths were first by Cæsar worn,
And still they Cæsar's successors adorn:
One leaf of this is immortality,
And more of worth than all the world can buy.
One doubt remains, said I, the dames in green,
What were their qualities, and who their queen?
Flora commands, said she, those nymphs and knights,
Who lived in slothful ease and loose delights;
Who never acts of honour durst pursue,
The men inglorious knights, the ladies all untrue:
Who, nursed in idleness, and train'd in courts,
Pass'd all their precious hours in plays and sports,
Till death behind came stalking on unseen,
And wither'd (like the storm) the freshness of their green.
These, and their mates, enjoy their present hour,
And therefore pay their homage to the Flower.
But knights in knightly deeds should persevere,
And still continue what at first they were;
Continue and proceed in honour's fair career.
No room for cowardice or dull delay;

From good to better they should urge their way.
For this with golden spurs the chiefs are graced,
With pointed rowels arm'd to mend their haste.
For this with lasting leaves their brows are bound;
For laurel is the sign of labour crown'd,
Which bears the bitter blast, nor shaken falls to ground:
From winter winds it suffers no decay,
For ever fresh and fair, and every month is May.
Even when the vital sap retreats below,
Even when the hoary head is hid in snow,
The life is in the leaf, and still between
The fits of falling snow, appears the streaky green.
Not so the flower, which lasts for little space,
A short-lived good, and an uncertain grace;
This way and that the feeble stem is driven,
Weak to sustain the storms, and injuries of heaven.
Propp'd by the spring, it lifts aloft the head,
But of a sickly beauty, soon to shed;
In summer living, and in winter dead.
For things of tender kind, for pleasure made,
Shoot up with swift increase, and sudden are decay'd.
With humble words, the wisest I could frame,
And proffer'd service, I repaid the dame;
That, of her grace, she gave her maid to know
The secret meaning of this moral show.
And she, to prove what profit I had made
Of mystic truth, in fables first convey'd,
Demanded, till the next returning May,
Whether the Leaf or Flower I would obey?
I chose the Leaf; she smiled with sober cheer,
And wish'd me fair adventure for the year,
And gave me charms and sigils, for defence
Against ill tongues that scandal innocence:
But I, said she, my fellows must pursue,
Already past the plain, and out of view.
We parted thus: I homeward sped my way,
Bewilder'd in the wood till dawn of day:
And met the merry crew who danced about the May.
Then late refresh'd with sleep, I rose to write
The visionary vigils of the night.—
Blush, as thou may'st, my little book with shame!
Nor hope with homely verse to purchase fame;
For such thy maker chose; and so design'd
Thy simple style to suit thy lowly kind.

THE WIFE OF BATH.

HER TALE.

In days of old, when Arthur fill'd the throne,
Whose acts and fame to foreign lands were blown;
The king of elfs and little fairy queen
Gamboll'd on heaths, and danced on every green;
And where the jolly troop had led the round,
The grass unbidden rose, and mark'd the ground:
Nor darkling did they dance, the silver light
Of Phœbe served to guide their steps aright,
And with their tripping pleased, prolong the night.
Her beams they follow'd, where at full she play'd,
No longer than she shed her horns they staid,
From thence with airy flight to foreign lands convey'd.
Above the rest our Britain held they dear,
More solemnly they kept their sabbaths here,
And made more spacious rings, and revell'd half the year.
I speak of ancient times, for now the swain
Returning late may pass the woods in vain,
And never hope to see the nightly train:
In vain the dairy now with mints is dress'd,
The dairy-maid expects no fairy guest,
To skim the bowls, and after pay the feast.
She sighs, and shakes her empty shoes in vain,
No silver penny to reward her pain:
For priests with prayers, and other godly gear,
Have made the merry goblins disappear;
And where they play'd their merry pranks before,
Have sprinkled holy water on the floor:
And friars that through the wealthy regions run,
(Thick as the motes that twinkle in the sun,)
Resort to farmers rich, and bless their halls,
And exorcise the beds, and cross the walls:
This makes the fairy choirs forsake the place,
When once 'tis hallow'd with the rites of grace:
But in the walks where wicked elves have been,
The learning of the parish now is seen,
The midnight parson posting o'er the green
With gown tuck'd up to wakes; for Sunday next,
With humming ale encouraging his text;
Nor wants the holy leer to country-girl betwixt.

From fiends and imps he sets the village free,
There haunts not any incubus, but he.
The maids and women need no danger fear
To walk by night, and sanctity so near:
For by some haycock, or some shady thorn,
He tells his beads both even-song and morn.
It so befel in this king Arthur's reign,
A lusty knight was pricking o'er the plain;
A bachelor he was, and of the courtly train.
It happen'd as he rode, a damsel gay
In russet-robes to market took her way:
Soon on the girl he cast an amorous eye,
So straight she walk'd, and on her pasterns high:
If seeing her behind he liked her pace,
Now turning short, he better likes her face.
He lights in haste, and, full of youthful fire,
By force accomplish'd his obscene desire:
This done, away he rode, not unespied,
For swarming at his back the country cried:
And once in view they never lost the sight
But seized, and pinion'd brought to court the knight.
Then courts of kings were held in high renown,
Ere made the common brothels of the town:
There, virgins honourable vows received,
But chaste as maids in monasteries lived;
The king himself, to nuptial ties a slave,
No bad example to his poets gave:
And they, not bad, but in a vicious age,
Had not, to please the prince, debauch'd the stage.
Now what should Arthur do? He loved the knight,
But sovereign monarchs are the source of right:
Moved by the damsel's tears and common cry,
He doom'd the brutal ravisher to die.
But fair Geneura rose in his defence,
And pray'd so hard for mercy from the prince,
That to his queen the king the offender gave,
And left it in her power to kill or save:
This gracious act the ladies all approve,
Who thought it much a man should die for love;
And with their mistress join'd in close debate,
(Covering their kindness with dissembled hate;)
If not to free him, to prolong his fate.
At last agreed, they call'd him by consent
Before the queen and female parliament;

And the fair speaker, rising from the chair,
Did thus the judgment of the house declare.
Sir knight, though I have ask'd thy life, yet still
Thy destiny depends upon my will:
Nor hast thou other surety than the grace
Not due to thee from our offended race.
But as our kind is of a softer mould,
And cannot blood without a sigh behold,
I grant thee life: reserving still the power
To take the forfeit when I see my hour:
Unless thy answer to my next demand
Shall set thee free from our avenging hand.
The question, whose solution I require,
Is,—What the sex of women most desire?—
In this dispute thy judges are at strife;
Beware; for on thy wit depends thy life.
Yet (lest, surprised, unknowing what to say,
Thou damn thyself) we give thee farther day:
A year is thine to wander at thy will;
And learn from others, if thou want'st the skill.
But, not to hold our proffer'd turn in scorn,
Good sureties will we have for thy return;
That at the time prefix'd thou shalt obey,
And at thy pledge's peril keep thy day.
Woe was the knight at this severe command;
But well he knew 'twas bootless to withstand:
The terms accepted, as the fair ordain,
He put in bail for his return again,
And promised answer at the day assign'd,
The best, with Heaven's assistance, he could find.
His leave thus taken, on his way he went
With heavy heart, and full of discontent,
Misdoubting much, and fearful of the event.
'Twas hard the truth of such a point to find,
As was not yet agreed among the kind.
Thus on he went; still anxious more and more,
Ask'd all he met, and knock'd at every door;
Inquired of men; but made his chief request
To learn from women what they loved the best.
They answer'd each according to her mind
To please herself, not all the female kind.
One was for wealth, another was for place;
Crones, old and ugly, wish'd a better face.

The widow's wish was oftentimes to wed;
The wanton maids were all for sport a-bed.
Some said the sex were pleased with handsome lies,
And some gross flattery loved without disguise:
Truth is, says one, he seldom fails to win
Who flatters well, for that 's our darling sin.
But long attendance, and a duteous mind,
Will work even with the wisest of the kind.
One thought the sex's prime felicity
Was from the bonds of wedlock to be free:
Their pleasures, hours, and actions all their own,
And uncontroll'd to give account to none.
Some with a husband-fool; but such are curst,
For fools perverse of husbands are the worst:
All women would be counted chaste and wise,
Nor should our spouses see, but with our eyes;
For fools will prate; and though they want the wit
To find close faults, yet open blots will hit;
Though better for their ease to hold their tongue,
For woman-kind was never in the wrong.
So noise ensues, and quarrels last for life;
The wife abhors the fool, the fool the wife.
And some men say, that great delight have we,
To be for truth extoll'd, and secresy:
And constant in one purpose still to dwell;
And not our husband's counsels to reveal.
But that 's a fable: for our sex is frail,
Inventing rather than not tell a tale.
Like leaky sieves no secrets we can hold:
Witness the famous tale that Ovid told.
  Midas the king, as in his book appears,
By Phœbus was endow'd with asses' ears,
Which under his long locks he well conceal'd,
(As monarchs' vices must not be reveal'd)
For fear the people have 'em in the wind,
Who long ago were neither dumb nor blind:
Nor apt to think from heaven their title springs,
Since Jove and Mars left off begetting kings.
This Midas knew; and durst communicate
To none but to his wife, his ears of state:
One must be trusted, and he thought her fit,
As passing prudent, and a parlous wit.
To this sagacious confessor he went,
And told her what a gift the gods had sent:

But told it under matrimonial seal,
With strict injunction never to reveal.
The secret heard, she plighted him her troth,
(And sacred sure is every woman's oath)
The royal malady should rest unknown,
Both for her husband's honour and her own;
But ne'ertheless she pined with discontent;
The counsel rumbled till it found a vent.
The thing she knew she was obliged to hide;
By interest and by oath the wife was tied;
But, if she told it not, the woman died.
Loth to betray a husband and a prince,
But she must burst, or blab, and no pretence
Of honour tied her tongue from self-defence.
A marshy ground commodiously was near,
Thither she ran, and held her breath for fear,
Lest if a word she spoke of any thing,
That word might be the secret of the king.
Thus full of counsel to the fen she went,
Griped all the way, and longing for a vent;
Arrived, by pure necessity compell'd,
On her majestic marrow-bones she kneel'd:
Then to the water's brink she laid her head,
And, as a bittern bumps within a reed,
To thee alone, O lake, she said, I tell,
(And, as thy queen, command thee to conceal,)
Beneath his locks the king my husband wears
A goodly royal pair of asses' ears!—
Now I have eased my bosom of the pain,
Till the next longing fit return again.
Thus through a woman was the secret known;
Tell us, and in effect you tell the town.
But to my tale;—The knight with heavy cheer,
Wand'ring in vain, had now consumed the year:
One day was only left to solve the doubt,
Yet knew no more than when he first set out.
But home he must, and as the award had been,
Yield up his body captive to the queen.
In this despairing state he happ'd to ride,
As fortune led him, by a forest side:
Lonely the vale, and full of horror stood,
Brown with the shade of a religious wood:
When full before him at the noon of night,
(The moon was up, and shot a gleamy light)

He saw a choir of ladies in a round
That featly footing seem'd to skim the ground:
Thus dancing hand in hand, so light they were,
He knew not where they trod, on earth or air.
At speed he drove, and came a sudden guest,
In hope where many women were, at least
Some one by chance might answer his request.
But faster than his horse the ladies flew,
And in a trice were vanish'd out of view.
One only hag remain'd; but fouler far
Than grandame apes in Indian forests are;
Against a wither'd oak she lean'd her weight,
Propp'd on her trusty staff, not half upright,
And dropp'd an awkward court'sy to the knight.
Then said, What makes you, Sir, so late abroad
Without a guide, and this no beaten road?
Or want you aught that here you hope to find,
Or travel for some trouble in your mind?
The last I guess; and if I read aright,
Those of our sex are bound to serve a knight;
Perhaps good counsel may your grief assuage,
Then tell your pain; for wisdom is in age.
To this the knight: Good mother, would you know
The secret cause and spring of all my woe?
My life must with to-morrow's light expire,
Unless I tell what women most desire.
Now could you help me at this hard essay,
Or for your inborn goodness, or for pay;
Yours is my life, redeem'd by your advice,
Ask what you please, and I will pay the price:
The proudest kerchief of the court shall rest
Well satisfied of what they love the best.
Plight me thy faith, quoth she, that what I ask,
Thy danger over, and perform'd thy task,
That thou shalt give for hire of thy demand;
Here take thy oath, and seal it on my hand;
I warrant thee, on peril of my life,
Thy words shall please both widow, maid, and wife.
More words there needed not to move the knight,
To take her offer, and his truth to plight.
With that she spread a mantle on the ground,
And, first inquiring whither he was bound,
Bade him not fear, though long and rough the way,
At court he should arrive ere break of day;

His horse should find the way without a guide.
She said: with fury they began to ride,
He on the midst, the beldam at his side.
The horse, what devil drove I cannot tell,
But only this, they sped their journey well:
And all the way the crone inform'd the knight,
How he should answer the demand aright.
To court they came; the news was quickly spread
Of his returning to redeem his head.
The female senate was assembled soon,
With all the mob of women in the town:
The queen sat lord chief justice of the hall,
And bade the crier cite the criminal.
The knight appear'd; and silence they proclaim:
Then first the culprit answer'd to his name:
And, after forms of law, was last required
To name the thing that women most desired.
The offender, taught his lesson by the way,
And by his counsel order'd what to say,
Thus bold began: My lady liege, said he,
What all your sex desire is, Sovereignty!
The wife affects her husband to command;
All must be hers, both money, house, and land.
The maids are mistresses even in their name;
And of their servants full dominion claim.
This, at the peril of my head, I say,
A blunt plain truth, the sex aspires to sway,
You to rule all, while we, like slaves, obey.
There was not one, or widow, maid or wife,
But said the knight had well deserved his life.
Even fair Geneura, with a blush, confess'd
The man had found what women love the best.
Up starts the beldam, who was there unseen,
And, reverence made, accosted thus the queen:
My liege, said she, before the court arise,
May I, poor wretch, find favour in your eyes,
To grant my just request: 'twas I who taught
The knight this answer, and inspired his thought;
None but a woman could a man direct
To tell us women, what we most affect.
But first I swore him on his knightly troth
(And here demand performance of his oath),
To grant the boon that next I should desire;
He gave his faith, and I expect my hire:

My promise is fulfill'd: I saved his life,
And claim his debt, to take me for his wife.
The knight was ask'd, nor could his oath deny,
But hoped they would not force him to comply.
The women, who would rather wrest the laws,
Than let a sister-plaintiff lose the cause,
(As judges on the bench more gracious are,
And more attent to brothers of the bar)
Cried, one and all, the suppliant should have right,
And to the grandame-hag adjudged the knight.
In vain he sigh'd, and oft with tears desired,
Some reasonable suit might be required.
But still the crone was constant to her note;
The more he spoke, the more she stretch'd her throat.
In vain he proffer'd all his goods, to save
His body destined to that living grave.
The liquorish hag rejects the pelf with scorn;
And nothing but the man would serve her turn.
Not all the wealth of eastern kings, said she,
Have power to part my plighted love, and me:
And, old and ugly as I am, and poor,
Yet never will I break the faith I swore;
For mine thou art by promise, during life,
And I thy loving and obedient wife.
My love! nay rather my damnation thou,
Said he: nor am I bound to keep my vow;
The fiend thy sire hath sent thee from below,
Else, how couldst thou my secret sorrows know?
Avaunt, old witch, for I renounce thy bed:
The queen may take the forfeit of my head,
Ere any of my race so foul a crone shall wed.
Both heard, the judge pronounced against the knight;
So was he married in his own despite:
And all day after hid him as an owl,
Not able to sustain a sight so foul.
Perhaps the reader thinks I do him wrong,
To pass the marriage feast, and nuptial song:
Mirth there was none, the man was à-la-mort,
And little courage had to make his court.
To bed they went, the bridegroom and the bride:
Was never such an ill-pair'd couple tied:
Restless he toss'd, and tumbled to and fro,
And roll'd, and wriggled further off, for woe.

The good old wife lay smiling by his side,
And caught him in her quivering arms, and cried,
When you my ravish'd predecessor saw,
You were not then become this man of straw;
Had you been such, you might have 'scaped the law.
Is this the custom of King Arthur's court?
Are all round-table knights of such a sort?
Remember I am she who saved your life,
Your loving, lawful, and complying wife:
Not thus you swore in your unhappy hour,
Nor I for this return employ'd my power.
In time of need I was your faithful friend;
Nor did I since, nor ever will offend.
Believe me, my loved lord, 'tis much unkind;
What fury has possess'd your alter'd mind?
Thus on my wedding night—without pretence—
Come, turn this way, or tell me my offence.
If not your wife, let reason's rule persuade;
Name but my fault, amends shall soon be made.
  Amends! nay, that 's impossible, said he,
What change of age or ugliness can be?
Or could Medea's magic mend thy face,
Thou art descended from so mean a race,
That never knight was match'd with such disgrace.
What wonder, madam, if I move my side,
When, if I turn, I turn to such a bride?
And is this all that troubles you so sore?
And what the devil couldst thou wish me more?
Ah, Benedicite! replied the crone:
Then cause of just complaining have you none.
The remedy to this were soon applied,
Would you be like the bridegroom to the bride:
But, for you say a long-descended race,
And wealth, and dignity, and power, and place,
Make gentlemen, and that your high degree
Is much disparaged to be match'd with me;
Know this, my lord, nobility of blood
Is but a glittering and fallacious good:
The nobleman is he, whose noble mind
Is fill'd with inborn worth, unborrow'd from his kind.
The King of Heaven was in a manger laid,
And took his earth but from an humble Maid;
Then what can birth, or mortal men, bestow?
Since floods no higher than their fountains flow.

We, who for name and empty honour strive,
Our true nobility from him derive.
Your ancestors, who puff your mind with pride,
And vast estates to mighty titles tied,
Did not your honour, but their own advance;
For virtue comes not by inheritance.
If you tralineate from your father's mind,
What are you else but of a bastard kind?
Do as your great progenitors have done,
And, by their virtues, prove yourself their son.
No father can infuse or wit or grace;
A mother comes across, and mars the race:
A grandsire or a grandame taints the blood,
And seldom three descents continue good.
Were virtue by descent, a noble name
Could never villanise his father's fame:
But, as the first, the last of all the line,
Would, like the sun, even in descending, shine.
Take fire, and bear it to the darkest house
Betwixt King Arthur's court and Caucasus;
If you depart, the flame shall still remain,
And the bright blaze enlighten all the plain:
Nor, till the fuel perish, can decay,
By nature form'd on things combustible to prey.
Such is not man, who, mixing better seed
With worse, begets a base degenerate breed:
The bad corrupts the good, and leaves behind
No trace of all the great begetter's mind.
The father sinks within his son, we see,
And often rises in the third degree;
If better luck a better mother give,
Chance gave us being, and by chance we live.
Such as our atoms were, even such are we,
Or call it chance, or strong necessity:
Thus loaded with dead weight, the will is free.
And thus it needs must be: for seed conjoin'd
Lets into nature's work the imperfect kind:
But fire, the enlivener of the general frame,
Is one, its operation still the same.
Its principle is in itself: while ours
Works, as confederates war, with mingled powers;
Or man or woman, whichsoever fails:
And, oft, the vigour of the worst prevails.

Æther with sulphur blended alters hue,
And casts a dusky gleam of Sodom blue.
Thus, in a brute, their ancient honour ends,
And the fair mermaid in a fish descends:
The line is gone—no longer duke or earl;
But, by himself degraded, turns a churl.
Nobility of blood is but renown
Of thy great fathers by their virtue known,
And a long trail of light, to thee descending down:
If in thy smoke it ends, their glories shine;
But infamy and villanage are thine.
Then what I said before is plainly show'd,
The true nobility proceeds from God:
Nor left us by inheritance, but given
By bounty of our stars, and grace of Heaven.
Thus from a captive Servius Tullius rose,
Whom for his virtues the first Romans chose:
Fabricius from their walls repell'd the foe,
Whose noble hands had exercised the plough.
From hence, my lord, and love, I thus conclude,
That though my homely ancestors were rude,
Mean as I am, yet I may have the grace
To make you father of a generous race:
And noble then am I, when I begin,
In virtue clothed, to cast the rags of sin.
If poverty be my upbraided crime,
And you believe in Heaven, there was a time
When He, the great controller of our fate,
Deign'd to be man, and lived in low estate;
Which He who had the world at his dispose,
If poverty were vice, had never chose.
Philosophers have said, and poets sing,
That a glad poverty's an honest thing.
Content is wealth, the riches of the mind;
And happy he who can that treasure find.
But the base miser starves amidst his store,
Broods on his gold, and, griping still at more,
Sits sadly pining, and believes he 's poor.
The ragged beggar, though he want relief,
Has not to lose, and sings before the thief.
Want is a bitter and a hateful good,
Because its virtues are not understood:
Yet many things, impossible to thought,
Have been by need to full perfection brought:

The daring of the soul proceeds from thence,
Sharpness of wit, and active diligence;
Prudence at once, and fortitude, it gives,
And, if in patience taken, mends our lives;
For even that indigence, that brings me low,
Makes me myself, and Him above, to know;
A good which none would challenge, few would choose,
A fair possession, which mankind refuse.
If we from wealth to poverty descend
Want gives to know the flatterer from the friend.
If I am old and ugly, well for you,
No lewd adulterer will my love pursue;
Nor jealousy, the bane of married life,
Shall haunt you for a wither'd homely wife:
For age and ugliness, as all agree,
Are the best guards of female chastity.
Yet since I see your mind is worldly bent,
I'll do my best to further your content.
And therefore of two gifts in my dispose,
Think ere you speak, I grant you leave to choose:—
Would you I should be still deform'd and old,
Nauseous to touch, and loathsome to behold;
On this condition, to remain for life,
A careful, tender, and obedient wife,
In all I can contribute to your ease,
And not in deed, or word, or thought displease?
Or would you rather have me young and fair,
And take the chance that happens to your share?
Temptations are in beauty and in youth,
And how can you depend upon my truth?
Now weigh the danger with the doubtful bliss,
And thank yourself, if aught should fall amiss.
Sore sigh'd the knight, who this long sermon heard
At length considering all, his heart he cheer'd;
And thus replied: My lady, and my wife,
To your wise conduct I resign my life;
Choose you for me, for well you understand
The future good and ill, on either hand:
But if an humble husband may request,
Provide, and order all things for the best;
Yours be the care to profit, and to please:
And let your subject servant take his ease.
Then thus in peace, quoth she, concludes the strife,
Since I am turn'd the husband, you the wife:

The matrimonial victory is mine,
Which, having fairly gain'd, I will resign.
Forgive if I have said or done amiss,
And seal the bargain with a friendly kiss:
I promised you but one content to share,
But now I will become both good and fair.
No nuptial quarrel shall disturb your ease;
The business of my life shall be to please:
And for my beauty, that, as time shall try,
But draw the curtain first, and cast your eye.
He look'd, and saw a creature heavenly fair,
In bloom of youth, and of a charming air.
With joy he turn'd, and seized her ivory arm;
And, like Pygmalion, found the statue warm.
Small arguments there needed to prevail,
A storm of kisses pour'd as thick as hail.
Thus long in mutual bliss they lay embraced,
And their first love continued to the last:
One sunshine was their life, no cloud between;
Nor ever was a kinder couple seen.
And so may all our lives like theirs be led;
Heaven send the maids young husbands fresh in bed;
May widows wed as often as they can,
And ever for the better change their man.
And some devouring plague pursue their lives,
Who will not well be govern'd by their wives.

THE CHARACTER OF A GOOD PARSON.

A PARISH priest was of the pilgrim train;
An awful, reverend, and religious man,
His eyes diffused a venerable grace,
And charity itself was in his face.
Rich was his soul, though his attire was poor;
(As God had clothed his own ambassador;)
For such, on earth, his bless'd Redeemer bore.
Of sixty years he seem'd; and well might last
To sixty more, but that he lived too fast;
Refined himself to soul, to curb the sense;
And made almost a sin of abstinence.
Yet, had his aspect nothing of severe,
But such a face as promised him sincere.

Nothing reserved or sullen was to see:
But sweet regards; and pleasing sanctity:
Mild was his accent, and his action free.
With eloquence innate his tongue was arm'd;
Though harsh the precept, yet the preacher charm'd.
For letting down the golden chain from high,
He drew his audience upward to the sky;
And oft, with holy hymns, he charm'd their ears:
(A music more melodious than the spheres:)
For David left him, when he went to rest,
His lyre; and after him he sung the best.
He bore his great commission in his look:
But sweetly temper'd awe; and soften'd all he spoke.
He preach'd the joys of heaven, and pains of hell;
And warn'd the sinner with becoming zeal;
But on eternal mercy loved to dwell.
He taught the gospel rather than the law;
And forced himself to drive; but loved to draw.
For fear but freezes minds; though love, like heat,
Exhales the soul sublime, to seek her native seat.
To threats the stubborn sinner oft is hard;
Wrapp'd in his crimes, against the storm prepared;
But, when the milder beams of mercy play,
He melts, and throws his cumbrous cloak away.
Lightning and thunder (heaven's artillery)
As harbingers before the Almighty fly:
Those but proclaim his style, and disappear;
The stiller sound succeeds, and God is there!
The tithes, his parish freely paid, he took;
But never sued, or cursed with bell and book.
With patience bearing wrong; but offering none;
Since every man is free to lose his own.
The country churls, according to their kind,
(Who grudge their dues, and love to be behind,)
The less he sought his offerings, pinch'd the more,
And praised a priest contented to be poor.
Yet of his little he had some to spare,
To feed the famish'd, and to clothe the bare:
For mortified he was to that degree,
A poorer than himself he would not see.
True priests, he said, and preachers of the word,
Were only stewards of their sovereign Lord;
Nothing was theirs; but all the public store:
Intrusted riches, to relieve the poor.

Who, should they steal, for want of his relief,
He judged himself accomplice with the thief.
Wide was his parish; not contracted close
In streets, but here and there a straggling house;
Yet still he was at hand, without request,
To serve the sick, to succour the distress'd;
Tempting, on foot, alone, without affright,
The dangers of a dark tempestuous night.
All this the good old man perform'd alone,
Nor spared his pains; for curate he had none.
Nor durst he trust another with his care;
Nor rode himself to Paul's, the public fair,
To chaffer for preferment with his gold,
Where bishoprics and sinecures are sold.
But duly watch'd his flock by night and day,
And from the prowling wolf redeem'd the prey,
And hungry sent the wily fox away.
The proud he tamed, the penitent he cheer'd;
Nor to rebuke the rich offender fear'd.
His preaching much, but more his practice wrought;
(A living sermon of the truths he taught;)
For this by rules severe his life he squared:
That all might see the doctrine which they heard.
For priests, he said, are patterns for the rest:
(The gold of heaven, who bear the God impress'd:)
But when the precious coin is kept unclean,
The sovereign's image is no longer seen.
If they be foul on whom the people trust,
Well may the baser brass contract a rust.
The prelate, for his holy life he prized;
The worldly pomp of prelacy despised,
His Saviour came not with a gaudy show;
Nor was his kingdom of the world below.
Patience in want, and poverty of mind,
These marks of Church and Churchmen he design'd.
And living taught, and dying left behind.
The crown he wore was of the pointed thorn:
In purple he was crucified, not born.
They who contend for place and high degree,
Are not his sons, but those of Zebedee.
Not but he knew the signs of earthly power
Might well become Saint Peter's successor;
The holy father holds a double reign,
The prince may keep his pomp, the fisher must be plain.

Such was the saint; who shone with every grace,
Reflecting, Moses-like, his Maker's face.
God saw his image lively was express'd;
And his own work, as in creation, bless'd.
The tempter saw him too with envious eye;
And, as on Job, demanded leave to try.
He took the time when Richard was deposed,
And high and low with happy Harry closed.
This prince, though great in arms, the priest withstood:
Near though he was, yet not the next of blood.
Had Richard, unconstrain'd, resign'd the throne,
A king can give no more than is his own;
The title stood entail'd, had Richard had a son.
Conquest, an odious name, was laid aside,
Where all submitted, none the battle tried.
The senseless plea of right by providence
Was, by a flattering priest, invented since;
And lasts no longer than the present sway;
But justifies the next who comes in play.
The people's right remains; let those who dare
Dispute their power, when they the judges are.
He join'd not in their choice, because he knew
Worse might, and often did, from change ensue.
Much to himself he thought; but little spoke;
And, undeprived, his benefice forsook.
Now, through the land, his cure of souls he stretch'd;
And like a primitive apostle preach'd.
Still cheerful, ever constant to his call,
By many follow'd, loved by most, admired by all.
With what he begg'd, his brethren he relieved,
And gave the charities himself received.
Gave while he taught, and edified the more,
Because he show'd by proof, 'twas easy to be poor.
He went not with the crowd to see a shrine;
But fed us, by the way, with food divine.
In deference to his virtues, I forbear
To show you what the rest in orders were:
This brilliant is so spotless and so bright,
He needs no foil, but shines by his own proper light.

TRANSLATIONS FROM BOCCACCIO.

SIGISMONDA AND GUISCARDO.

WHILE Norman Tancred in Salerno reign'd,
The title of a gracious prince he gain'd;
Till turn'd a tyrant in his latter days,
He lost the lustre of his former praise;
And, from the bright meridian where he stood
Descending, dipp'd his hands in lovers' blood.
This prince, of fortune's favour long possess'd,
Yet was with one fair daughter only bless'd;
And bless'd he might have been with her alone:
But oh! how much more happy, had he none!
She was his care, his hope, and his delight,
Most in his thought, and ever in his sight:
Next, nay beyond his life, he held her dear;
She lived by him, and now he lived in her.
For this, when ripe for marriage, he delay'd
Her nuptial bands, and kept her long a maid,
As envying any else should share a part
Of what was his, and claiming all her heart.
At length, as public decency required,
And all his vassals eagerly desired,
With mind averse, he rather underwent
His people's will, than gave his own consent.
So was she torn, as from a lover's side,
And made, almost in his despite, a bride.
Short were her marriage joys; for, in the prime
Of youth, her lord expired before his time:
And to her father's court in little space
Restored anew, she held a higher place;
More loved, and more exalted into grace.
This princess, fresh and young, and fair and wise,
The worshipp'd idol of her father's eyes,
Did all her sex in every grace exceed,
And had more wit beside than women need.
Youth, health, and ease, and most an amorous mind,
To second nuptials had her thoughts inclined:
And former joys had left a secret sting behind.

But, prodigal in every other grant,
Her sire left unsupplied her only want;
And she, betwixt her modesty and pride,
Her wishes, which she could not help, would hide.
Resolved at last to lose no longer time,
And yet to please herself without a crime,
She cast her eyes around the court, to find
A worthy subject suiting to her mind,
To him in holy nuptials to be tied,
A seeming widow, and a secret bride.
Among the train of courtiers, one she found
With all the gifts of bounteous nature crown'd,
Of gentle blood; but one whose niggard fate
Had set him far below her high estate;
Guiscard his name was call'd, of blooming age,
Now squire to Tancred, and before, his page:
To him, the choice of all the shining crowd,
Her heart the noble Sigismonda vow'd.
Yet hitherto she kept her love conceal'd,
And with those graces every day beheld
The graceful youth; and every day increased
The raging fires that burn'd within her breast;
Some secret charm did all his acts attend,
And what his fortune wanted, hers could mend;
Till, as the fire will force its outward way,
Or, in the prison pent, consume the prey;
So long her earnest eyes on his were set,
At length their twisted rays together met;
And he, surprised with humble joy, survey'd
One sweet regard, shot by the royal maid:
Not well assured, while doubtful hopes he nursed,
A second glance came gliding like the first;
And he, who saw the sharpness of the dart,
Without defence received it in his heart.
In public, though their passion wanted speech,
Yet mutual looks interpreted for each;
Time, ways, and means of meeting were denied;
But all those wants ingenious love supplied.
The inventive god, who never fails his part,
Inspires the wit, when once he warms the heart.
When Guiscard next was in the circle seen,
Where Sigismonda held the place of queen,
A hollow cane within her hand she brought,
But in the concave had enclosed a note;

With this she seem'd to play, and, as in sport,
Toss'd to her love, in presence of the court;
Take it, she said; and when your needs require,
This little brand will serve to light your fire.
He took it with a bow, and soon divined
The seeming toy was not for nought design'd:
But when retired, so long with curious eyes
He view'd his present, that he found the prize.
Much was in little writ; and all convey'd
With cautious care, for fear to be betray'd
By some false confident, or favourite maid.
The time, the place, the manner how to meet,
Were all in punctual order plainly set:
But since a trust must be, she thought it best
To put it out of laymen's power at least;
And for their solemn vows prepared a priest.
  Guiscard (her secret purpose understood)
With joy prepared to meet the coming good;
Nor pains nor danger was resolved to spare,
But use the means appointed by the fair.
  Next the proud palace of Salerno stood
A mount of rough ascent, and thick with wood.
Through this a cave was dug with vast expense:
The work it seem'd of some suspicious prince,
Who, when abusing power with lawless might,
From public justice would secure his flight.
The passage made by many a winding way,
Reach'd ev'n the room in which the tyrant lay.
Fit for his purpose, on a lower floor
He lodged, whose issue was an iron door
From whence, by stairs descending to the ground,
In the blind grot a safe retreat he found.
Its outlet ended in a brake o'ergrown
With brambles, choked by time, and now unknown.
A rift there was, which from the mountain's height
Convey'd a glimmering and malignant light,
A breathing-place to draw the damps away,
A twilight of an intercepted day.
The tyrant's den, whose use, though lost to fame,
Was now the apartment of the royal dame;
The cavern only to her father known,
By him was to his darling daughter shown.
  Neglected long she let the secret rest,
Till love recall'd it to her labouring breast,

And hinted as the way by heaven design'd
The teacher, by the means he taught, to blind.
What will not women do, when need inspires
Their wit, or love their inclination fires!
Though jealousy of state the invention found,
Yet love refined upon the former ground.
That way, the tyrant had reserved, to fly
Pursuing hate, now served to bring two lovers nigh.
The dame, who long in vain had kept the key,
Bold by desire, explored the secret way;
Now tried the stairs, and, wading through the night,
Search'd all the deep recess, and issued into light.
All this her letter had so well explain'd,
The instructed youth might compass what remain'd;
The cavern-mouth alone was hard to find,
Because the path, disused, was out of mind:
But in what quarter of the copse it lay,
His eye by certain level could survey:
Yet (for the wood perplex'd with thorns he knew)
A frock of leather o'er his limbs he drew;
And thus provided, search'd the brake around,
Till the choked entry of the cave he found.
Thus, all prepared, the promised hour arrived,
So long expected, and so well contrived:
With love to friend, the impatient lover went,
Fenced from the thorns, and trod the deep descent.
The conscious priest, who was suborn'd before,
Stood ready posted at the postern door;
The maids in distant rooms were sent to rest;
And nothing wanted but the invited guest.
He came, and knocking thrice without delay,
The longing lady heard, and turn'd the key;
At once invaded him with all her charms,
And the first step he made was in her arms:
The leathern outside, boisterous as it was,
Gave way, and bent beneath her strict embrace:
On either side the kisses flew so thick,
That neither he nor she had breath to speak.
The holy man, amazed at what he saw,
Made haste to sanctify the bliss by law;
And mutter'd fast the matrimony o'er,
For fear committed sin should get before.
His work perform'd, he left the pair alone,
Because he knew he could not go too soon;

His presence odious, when his task was done.
What thoughts he had beseems me not to say;
Though some surmise he went to fast and pray,
And needed both to drive the tempting thoughts away.
The foe once gone, they took their full delight;
'Twas restless rage, and tempest all the night;
For greedy love each moment would employ,
And grudge the shortest pauses of their joy.
Thus were their loves auspiciously begun,
And thus with secret care were carried on.
The stealth itself did appetite restore,
And look'd so like a sin, it pleased the more.
The cave was now become a common way,
The wicket, often open'd, knew the key:
Love rioted secure, and long enjoy'd,
Was ever eager, and was never cloy'd.
But as extremes are short, of ill and good,
And tides at highest mark regorge their flood;
So fate, that could no more improve their joy,
Took a malicious pleasure to destroy.
Tancred, who fondly loved, and whose delight
Was placed in his fair daughter's daily sight,
Of custom, when his state affairs were done,
Would pass his pleasing hours with her alone;
And, as a father's privilege allow'd,
Without attendance of the officious crowd.
It happen'd once, that when in heat of day
He tried to sleep, as was his usual way,
The balmy slumber fled his wakeful eyes,
And forced him, in his own despite, to rise:
Of sleep forsaken, to relieve his care,
He sought the conversation of the fair;
But with her train of damsels she was gone,
In shady walks the scorching heat to shun:
He would not violate that sweet recess,
And found besides a welcome heaviness,
That seized his eyes; and slumber, which forgot,
When call'd before to come, now came unsought
From light retired, behind his daughter's bed,
He for approaching sleep composed his head;
A chair was ready, for that use design'd,
So quilted, that he lay at ease reclined;
The curtains closely drawn, the light to screen,
As if he had contrived to lie unseen:

Thus cover'd with an artificial night,
Sleep did his office soon, and seal'd his sight.
With Heaven averse, in this ill-omen'd hour
Was Guiscard summon'd to the secret bower,
And the fair nymph, with expectation fired,
From her attending damsels was retired:
For, true to love, she measured time so right,
As not to miss one moment of delight.
The garden, seated on the level floor,
She left behind, and locking every door,
Thought all secure; but little did she know,
Blind to her fate, she had enclosed her foe.
Attending Guiscard, in his leathern frock,
Stood ready, with his thrice-repeated knock:
Thrice with a doleful sound the jarring grate
Rung deaf and hollow, and presaged their fate
The door unlock'd, to know delight they haste,
And, panting in each other's arms embraced,
Rush to the conscious bed, a mutual freight,
And heedless press it with their wonted weight.
The sudden bound awaked the sleeping sire,
And show'd a sight no parent can desire;
His opening eyes at once with odious view
The love discover'd, and the lover knew:
He would have cried; but hoping that he dreamt,
Amazement tied his tongue, and stopp'd the attempt.
The ensuing moment all the truth declared,
But now he stood collected, and prepared,
For malice and revenge had put him on his guard.
So like a lion that unheeded lay,
Dissembling sleep, and watchful to betray,
With inward rage he meditates his prey.
The thoughtless pair, indulging their desires,
Alternate kindled, and then quench'd their fires;
Nor thinking in the shades of death they play'd,
Full of themselves, themselves alone survey'd,
And, too secure, were by themselves betray'd.
Long time dissolved in pleasure thus they lay,
Till nature could no more suffice their play;
Then rose the youth, and through the cave again
Return'd; the princess mingled with her train.
Resolved his unripe vengeance to defer,—
The royal spy,—when now the coast was clear,

Sought not the garden, but retired unseen,
To brood in secret on his gather'd spleen,
And methodise revenge: to death he grieved;
And, but he saw the crime, had scarce believed.
The appointment for the ensuing night he heard;
And therefore in the cavern had prepared
Two brawny yeomen of his trusty guard.
Scarce had unwary Guiscard set his foot
Within the foremost entrance of the grot,
When these in secret ambush ready lay,
And rushing on the sudden, seized the prey:
Encumber'd with his frock, without defence,
An easy prize, they led the prisoner thence,
And, as commanded, brought before the prince.
The gloomy sire, too sensible of wrong
To vent his rage in words, restrain'd his tongue;
And only said, Thus servants are preferr'd,
And, trusted, thus their sovereigns they reward.
Had I not seen, had not these eyes received
Too clear a proof, I could not have believed.
He paused and choked the rest. The youth who saw
His forfeit life abandon'd to the law,
The judge the accuser, and the offence to him
Who had both power and will to avenge the crime,
No vain defence prepared; but thus replied:
The faults of love by love are justified:
With unresisted might the monarch reigns,
He levels mountains, and he raises plains;
And, not regarding difference of degree,
Abased your daughter, and exalted me.
This bold return with seeming patience heard,
The prisoner was remitted to the guard.
The sullen tyrant slept not all the night,
But, lonely walking by a winking light,
Sobb'd, wept, and groan'd, and beat his wither'd breast,
But would not violate his daughter's rest;
Who long expecting lay, for bliss prepared,
Listening for noise, and grieved that none she heard:
Oft rose, and oft in vain employ'd the key,
And oft accused her lover of delay;
And pass'd the tedious hours in anxious thoughts away.
The morrow came; and at his usual hour
Old Tancred visited his daughter's bower;

Her cheek (for such his custom was) he kiss'd,
Then bless'd her kneeling, and her maids dismiss'd.
The royal dignity thus far maintain'd,
Now left in private, he no longer feign'd;
But all at once his grief and rage appear'd,
And floods of tears ran trickling down his beard.
O Sigismonda! he began to say:
Thrice he began, and thrice was forced to stay,
Till words, with often trying, found their way:
I thought, O Sigismonda (but how blind
Are parents' eyes, their children's faults to find!)
Thy virtue, birth, and breeding were above
A mean desire, and vulgar sense of love:
Nor less than sight and hearing could convince
So fond a father, and so just a prince,
Of such an unforeseen, and unbelieved offence.
Then what indignant sorrow must I have,
To see thee lie subjected to my slave!
A man so smelling of the people's lee,
The court received him first for charity:
And since, with no degree of honour graced,
But only suffer'd, where he first was placed:
A grovelling insect still; and so design'd
By nature's hand, nor born of noble kind:
A thing, by neither man nor woman prized,
And scarcely known enough to be despised.
To what has Heaven reserved my age? Ah! why
Should man, when nature calls, not choose to die,
Rather than stretch the span of life, to find
Such ills as fate has wisely cast behind,
For those to feel, whom fond desire to live
Makes covetous of more than life can give!
Each has his share of good; and when 'tis gone,
The guest, though hungry, cannot rise too soon.
But I, expecting more, in my own wrong
Protracting life, have lived a day too long.
If yesterday could be recall'd again,
Even now would I conclude my happy reign:
But 'tis too late, my glorious race is run,
And a dark cloud o'ertakes my setting sun.
Hadst thou not loved, or loving saved the shame,
If not the sin, by some illustrious name;
This little comfort had relieved my mind,
'Twas frailty, not unusual to thy kind:

But thy low fall beneath thy royal blood,
Shows downward appetite to mix with mud.
Thus not the least excuse is left for thee,
Nor the least refuge for unhappy me.
For him I have resolved: whom by surprise
I took, and scarce can call it, in disguise;
For such was his attire, as, with intent
Of nature, suited to his mean descent:
The harder question yet remains behind,
What pains a parent and a prince can find
To punish an offence of this degenerate kind.
As I have loved, and yet I love thee, more
Than ever father loved a child before;
So that indulgence draws me to forgive;
Nature, that gave thee life, would have thee live.
But, as a public parent of the state,
My justice, and thy crime, requires thy fate.
Fain would I choose a middle course to steer;
Nature 's too kind, and justice too severe:
Speak for us both, and to the balance bring
On either side the father and the king.
Heaven knows, my heart is bent to favour thee;
Make it but scanty weight, and leave the rest to me.
Here stopping with a sigh, he pour'd a flood
Of tears, to make his last expression good.
She, who had heard him speak, nor saw alone
The secret conduct of her love was known,
But he was taken who her soul possess'd,
Felt all the pangs of sorrow in her breast;
And little wanted, but a woman's heart,
With cries and tears, had testified her smart;
But inborn worth, that fortune can control,
New strung, and stiffer bent her softer soul;
The heroine assumed the woman's place,
Confirm'd her mind, and fortified her face:
Why should she beg, or what could she pretend,
When her stern father had condemn'd her friend?
Her life she might have had; but her despair
Of saving his, had put it past her care;
Resolved on fate, she would not lose her breath,
But, rather than not die, solicit death.
Fix'd on this thought, she not, as women use,
Her fault by common frailty would excuse;

But boldly justified her innocence,
And, while the fact was own'd, denied the offence:
Then with dry eyes, and with an open look,
She met his glance mid-way, and thus undaunted spoke:
Tancred, I neither am disposed to make
Request for life, nor offer'd life to take;
Much less deny the deed; but least of all
Beneath pretended justice weakly fall.
My words to sacred truth shall be confined,
My deeds shall show the greatness of my mind.
That I have loved, I own; that still I love,
I call to witness all the powers above:
Yet more I own: to Guiscard's love I give
The small remaining time I have to live;
And if beyond this life desire can be,
Not fate itself shall set my passion free.
This first avow'd; nor folly warp'd my mind,
Nor the frail texture of the female kind
Betray'd my virtue: for, too well I knew
What honour was, and honour had his due.
Before the holy priest my vows were tied,
So came I not a strumpet, but a bride.
This for my fame, and for the public voice:
Yet more, his merits justified my choice;
Which had they not, the first election thine,
That bond dissolved, the next is freely mine:
Or grant I err'd, (which yet I must deny)
Had parents power even second vows to tie,
Thy little care to mend my widow'd nights,
Has forced me to recourse of marriage rites,
To fill an empty side, and follow known delights.
What have I done in this, deserving blame?
State-laws may alter—Nature's are the same;
Those are usurp'd on helpless woman-kind,
Made without our consent, and wanting power to bind.
Thou, Tancred, better shouldst have understood,
That as thy father gave thee flesh and blood,
So gavest thou me: not from the quarry hew'd,
But of a softer mould, with sense endued;
Even softer than thy own, of suppler kind,
More exquisite of taste, and more than man refined.
Nor need'st thou by thy daughter to be told,
Though now thy sprightly blood with age be cold.

Thou hast been young: and canst remember still,
That when thou hadst the power, thou hadst the will;
And from the past experience of thy fires,
Canst tell with what a tide our strong desires
Come rushing on in youth, and what their rage requires.
And grant thy youth was exercised in arms,
When love no leisure found for softer charms,
My tender age in luxury was train'd,
With idle ease and pageants entertain'd;
My hours my own, my pleasures unrestrain'd:
So bred, no wonder if I took the bent
That seem'd even warranted by thy consent;
For, when the father is too fondly kind,
Such seed he sows, such harvest shall he find.
Blame then thyself, as reason's law requires,
(Since nature gave, and thou foment'st my fires;)
If still those appetites continue strong,
Thou may'st consider, I am yet but young:
Consider too that, having been a wife,
I must have tasted of a better life,
And am not to be blamed, if I renew
By lawful means the joys which then I knew.
Where was the crime, if pleasure I procured,
Young, and a woman, and to bliss inured?
That was my case, and this is my defence:
I pleased myself, I shunn'd incontinence,
And, urged by strong desires, indulged my sense.
Left to myself, I must avow, I strove,
From public shame to screen my secret love,
And, well acquainted with thy native pride,
Endeavour'd, what I could not help, to hide;
For which a woman's wit an easy way supplied.
How this, so well contrived, so closely laid,
Was known to thee, or by what chance betray'd,
Is not my care; to please thy pride alone,
I could have wish'd it had been still unknown.
Nor took I Guiscard by blind fancy led,
Or hasty choice, as many women wed;
But with deliberate care, and ripen'd thought,
At leisure first design'd, before I wrought:
On him I rested, after long debate,
And not without considering, fix'd my fate:
His flame was equal, though by mine inspired;
(For so the difference of our birth required;)

Had he been born like me, like me his love
Had first begun, what mine was forced to move:
But thus beginning, thus we persevere;
Our passions yet continue what they were,
Nor length of trial makes our joys the less sincere.
At this my choice, though not by thine allow'd,
(Thy judgment herding with the common crowd)
Thou takest unjust offence; and, led by them,
Dost less the merit, than the man esteem.
Too sharply, Tancred, by thy pride betray'd,
Hast thou against the laws of kind inveigh'd:
For all the offence is in opinion placed,
Which deems high birth by lowly choice debased.
This thought alone with fury fires thy breast,
(For holy marriage justifies the rest)
That I have sunk the glories of the state,
And mix'd my blood with a plebeian mate;
In which I wonder thou shouldst oversee
Superior causes, or impute to me
The fault of fortune, or the fates' decree.
Or call it Heaven's imperial power alone,
Which moves on springs of justice, though unknown.
Yet this we see, though order'd for the best,
The bad exalted, and the good oppress'd;
Permitted laurels grace the lawless brow,
The unworthy raised, the worthy cast below.
But leaving that: search we the secret springs,
And backward trace the principles of things;
There shall we find, that when the world began,
One common mass composed the mould of man;
One paste of flesh on all degrees bestow'd,
And kneaded up alike with moist'ning blood.
The same almighty power inspired the frame
With kindled life, and form'd the souls the same:
The faculties of intellect and will
Dispensed with equal hand, disposed with equal skill,
Like liberty indulged, with choice of good or ill:
Thus born alike, from virtue first began
The difference that distinguish'd man from man:
He claim'd no title from descent of blood,
But that, which made him noble, made him good:
Warm'd with more particles of heavenly flame;
He wing'd his upward flight, and soar'd to fame;
The rest remain'd below, a tribe without a name.

This law, though custom now diverts the course,
As nature's institute, is yet in force;
Uncancell'd, though disused; and he, whose mind
Is virtuous, is alone of noble kind;
Though poor in fortune, of celestial race;
And he commits the crime who calls him base.
Now lay the line; and measure all thy court
By inward virtue, not external port;
And find whom justly to prefer above
The man on whom my judgment placed my love:
So shalt thou see his parts and person shine;
And thus compared, the rest a base degenerate line.
Nor took I, when I first survey'd thy court,
His valour, or his virtues, on report;
But trusted what I ought to trust alone,
Relying on thy eyes, and not my own;
Thy praise (and thine was then the public voice)
First recommended Guiscard to my choice.
Directed thus by thee, I look'd, and found
A man I thought deserving to be crown'd;
First by my father pointed to my sight,
Nor less conspicuous by his native light;
His mind, his mien, the features of his face,
Excelling all the rest of human race:
These were thy thoughts, and thou could'st judge aright
Till interest made a jaundice in thy sight;
Or should I grant thou didst not rightly see;
Then thou wert first deceived, and I deceived by thee.
But if thou shalt allege, through pride of mind,
Thy blood with one of base condition join'd,
'Tis false; for 'tis not baseness to be poor;
His poverty augments thy crime the more;
Upbraids thy justice with the scant regard
Of worth; whom princes praise, they should reward.
Are these the kings entrusted by the crowd
With wealth, to be dispensed for common good?
The people sweat not for their king's delight,
To enrich a pimp, or raise a parasite;
Theirs is the toil; and he, who well has served
His country, has his country's wealth deserved.
Ev'n mighty monarchs oft are meanly born,
And kings by birth to lowest rank return;
All subject to the power of giddy chance,
For fortune can depress, or can advance:

But true nobility is of the mind,
Not given by chance, and not to chance resign'd.
For the remaining doubt of thy decree,
What to resolve, and how dispose of me,
Be warn'd to cast that useless care aside,
Myself alone will for myself provide.
If in thy doting and decrepit age,
Thy soul, a stranger in thy youth to rage,
Begins in cruel deeds to take delight,
Gorge with my blood thy barbarous appetite;
For I so little am disposed to pray
For life, I would not cast a wish away.
Such as it is, the offence is all my own;
And what to Guiscard is already done,
Or to be done, is doom'd by thy decree,
That, if not executed first by thee,
Shall on my person be perform'd by me.
Away! with women weep, and leave me here,
Fix'd, like a man, to die without a tear;
Or save, or slay us both this present hour;
'Tis all that fate has left within thy power.
She said: nor did her father fail to find
In all she spoke, the greatness of her mind;
Yet thought she was not obstinate to die,
Nor deem'd the death she promised was so nigh.
Secure in this belief, he left the dame,
Resolved to spare her life and save her shame;
But that detested object to remove,
To wreak his vengeance, and to cure her love.
Intent on this, a secret order sign'd
The death of Guiscard to his guards enjoin'd;
Strangling was chosen, and the night the time,
A mute revenge, and blind as was the crime:
His faithful heart, a bloody sacrifice,
Torn from his breast, to glut the tyrant's eyes,
Closed the severe command: for (slaves to pay)
What kings decree, the soldier must obey:
Waged against foes; and when the wars are o'er,
Fit only to maintain despotic power:
Dangerous to freedom, and desired alone
By kings who seek an arbitrary throne.
Such were these guards; as ready to have slain
The prince himself, allured with greater gain:

So was the charge perform'd with better will,
By men inured to blood, and exercised in ill.
Now, though the sullen sire had eased his mind,
The pomp of his revenge was yet behind,
A pomp prepared to grace the present he design'd.
A goblet rich with gems, and rough with gold,
Of depth, and breadth, the precious pledge to hold,
With cruel care he chose: the hollow part
Enclosed, the lid conceal'd, the lover's heart:
Then of his trusted mischiefs one he sent,
And bade him with these words the gift present:
Thy father sends thee this to cheer thy breast,
And glad thy sight with what thou lov'st the best;
As thou hast pleased his eyes, and joy'd his mind,
With what he loved the most of human kind.
Ere this the royal dame, who well had weigh'd
The consequence of what her sire had said,
Fix'd on her fate, against the expected hour,
Procured the means to have it in her power;
For this, she had distill'd with early care
The juice of simples friendly to despair,
A magazine of death; and thus prepared,
Secure to die, the fatal message heard:
Then smiled severe; nor with a troubled look,
Or trembling hand the funeral present took;
Ev'n kept her countenance, when the lid removed
Disclosed the heart, unfortunately loved.
She needed not be told, within whose breast
It lodged; the message had explain'd the rest.
Or not amazed, or hiding her surprise,
She sternly on the bearer fix'd her eyes:
Then thus: Tell Tancred, on his daughter's part,
The gold, though precious, equals not the heart:
But he did well to give his best; and I,
Who wish'd a worthier urn, forgive his poverty!
At this she curb'd a groan, that else had come,
And, pausing, view'd the present in the tomb;
Then to the heart adored devoutly glued
Her lips, and raising it, her speech renew'd:
Ev'n from my day of birth, to this, the bound
Of my unhappy being, I have found
My father's care and tenderness express'd;
But this last act of love excels the rest:

For this so dear a present, bear him back
The best return that I can live to make.
The messenger despatch'd, again she view'd
The loved remains, and sighing thus pursued:
Source of my life, and lord of my desires,
In whom I lived, with whom my soul expires,
Poor heart, no more the spring of vital heat,
Cursed be the hands that tore thee from thy seat!
The course is finish'd which thy fates decreed,
And thou from thy corporeal prison freed:
Soon hast thou reach'd the goal with mended pace,
A world of woes despatch'd in little space.
Forced by thy worth, thy foe in death become
Thy friend, has lodged thee in a costly tomb.
There yet remain'd thy funeral exequies,
The weeping tribute of thy widow's eyes,
And those, indulgent Heaven has found the way
That I, before my death, have leave to pay.
My father ev'n in cruelty is kind,
Or Heaven has turn'd the malice of his mind
To better uses than his hate design'd;
And made th' insult, which in his gift appears,
The means to mourn thee with my pious tears;
Which I will pay thee down, before I go,
And save myself the pains to weep below,
If souls can weep. Though once I meant to meet
My fate with face unmoved and eyes unwet,
Yet since I have thee here in narrow room,
My tears shall set thee first afloat within thy tomb:
Then (as I know thy spirit hovers nigh)
Under thy friendly conduct will I fly
To regions unexplored, secure to share
Thy state: nor hell shall punishment appear;
And heaven is double heaven, if thou art there!
She said: her brimful eyes, that ready stood,
And only wanted will to keep a flood,
Released their watery store, and pour'd amain,
Like clouds low hung, a sober shower of rain;
Mute solemn sorrow, free from female noise,
Such as the majesty of grief destroys;
For, bending o'er the cup, the tears she shed
Seem'd by the posture to discharge her head,
O'er-fill'd before; and (oft her mouth applied
To the cold heart,) she kiss'd at once, and cried.

Her maids, who stood amazed, nor knew the cause
Of her complaining, nor whose heart it was;
Yet all due measures of her mourning kept,
Did office at the dirge, and by infection wept;
And oft inquired the occasion of her grief,
(Unanswer'd but by sighs) and offer'd vain relief.
At length, her stock of tears already shed,
She wiped her eyes, she raised her drooping head,
And thus pursued: Oh ever faithful heart!
I have perform'd the ceremonial part,
The decencies of grief; it rests behind,
That, as our bodies were, our souls be join'd;
To thy whate'er abode my shade convey,
And as an elder ghost, direct the way.
She said; and bade the vial to be brought,
Where she before had brew'd the deadly draught:
First pouring out the med'cinable bane,
The heart, her tears had rinsed, she bathed again;
Then down her throat the death securely throws,
And quaffs a long oblivion of her woes.
This done, she mounts the genial bed, and there
(Her body first composed with honest care)
Attends the welcome rest; her hands yet hold
Close to her heart the monumental gold;
Nor farther word she spoke, but closed her sight,
And, quiet, sought the covert of the night.
The damsels, who the while in silence mourn'd,
Not knowing, nor suspecting death suborn'd,
Yet, as their duty was, to Tancred sent,
Who, conscious of the occasion, fear'd the event.
Alarm'd, and with presaging heart, he came,
And drew the curtains, and exposed the dame
To loathsome light: then with a late relief
Made efforts vain to mitigate her grief.
She, what she could, excluding day, her eyes
Kept firmly seal'd, and sternly thus replies:
Tancred! restrain thy tears, unsought by me,
And sorrow unavailing now to thee:
Did ever man before afflict his mind
To see the effect of what himself design'd?
Yet, if thou hast remaining in thy heart
Some sense of love, some unextinguish'd part
Of former kindness, largely once profess'd,

Let me by that adjure thy harden'd breast,
Not to deny thy daughter's last request:
The secret love which I so long enjoy'd,
And still conceal'd to gratify thy pride,
Thou hast disjoin'd; but, with my dying breath,
Seek not, I beg thee, to disjoin our death;
Where'er his corpse by thy command is laid,
Thither let mine in public be convey'd;
Exposed in open view, and side by side,
Acknowledged as a bridegroom and a bride.
The prince's anguish hinder'd his reply:
And she, who felt her fate approaching nigh,
Seized the cold heart, and heaving to her breast,
Here, precious pledge, she said, securely rest!
These accents were her last; the creeping death
Benumb'd her senses first, then stopp'd her breath.
Thus she for disobedience justly died:
The sire was justly punish'd for his pride:
The youth, least guilty, suffer'd for the offence
Of duty violated to his prince;
Who, late repenting of his cruel deed,
One common sepulchre for both decreed;
Intomb'd the wretched pair in royal state,
And on their monument inscribed their fate.

THEODORE AND HONORIA.

Of all the cities in Romanian lands,
The chief, and most renown'd, Ravenna stands:
Adorn'd in ancient times with arms and arts,
And rich inhabitants, with generous hearts.
But Theodore the brave, above the rest,
With gifts of fortune and of nature bless'd,
The foremost place for wealth and honour held,
And all in feats of chivalry excell'd.
This noble youth to madness loved a dame,
Of high degree, Honoria was her name:
Fair as the fairest, but of haughty mind,
And fiercer than became so soft a kind;
Proud of her birth, (for equal she had none,)
The rest she scorn'd; but hated him alone.
His gifts, his constant courtship, nothing gain'd;
For she, the more he loved, the more disdain'd.

He lived with all the pomp he could devise,
At tilts and tournaments obtained the prize;
But found no favour in his lady's eyes:
Relentless as a rock, the lofty maid
Turn'd all to poison that he did or said:
Nor prayers, nor tears, nor offer'd vows, could move;
The work went backward; and, the more he strove
To advance his suit, the farther from her love.
Wearied at length, and wanting remedy,
He doubted oft, and oft resolved to die.
But pride stood ready to prevent the blow;
For who would die to gratify a foe?
His generous mind disdain'd so mean a fate;
That pass'd, his next endeavour was to hate.
But vainer that relief than all the rest,
The less he hoped, with more desire possess'd;
Love stood the siege, and would not yield his breast.
Change was the next, but change deceived his care;
He sought a fairer, but found none so fair.
He would have worn her out by slow degrees,
As men by fasting starve the untamed disease:
But present love required a present ease.
Looking he feeds alone his famish'd eyes,
Feeds lingering death, but looking not he dies.
Yet still he chose the longest way to fate,
Wasting at once his life and his estate.
His friends beheld, and pitied him in vain;
For what advice can ease a lover's pain?
Absence, the best expedient they could find,
Might save the fortune, if not cure the mind:
This means they long proposed, but little gain'd;
Yet after much pursuit, at length obtain'd.
Hard you may think it was to give consent,
But struggling with his own desires he went,
With large expense, and with a pompous train,
Provided as to visit France and Spain,
Or for some distant voyage o'er the main.
But love had clipp'd his wings, and cut him short,
Confined within the purlieus of the court.
Three miles he went, nor farther could retreat;
His travels ended at his country-seat:
To Chassis' pleasing plains he took his way,
There pitch'd his tents, and there resolved to stay.

The spring was in the prime: the neighbouring grove
Supplied with birds, the choristers of love,
Music unbought, that minister'd delight
To morning walks, and lull'd his cares by night;
There he discharged his friends; but not the expense
Of frequent treats, and proud magnificence.
He lived as kings retire, though more at large
From public business, yet with equal charge;
With house and heart still open to receive;
As well content as love would give him leave:
He would have lived more free; but many a guest,
Who could forsake the friend, pursued the feast.
It happ'd one morning, as his fancy led,
Before his usual hour he left his bed,
To walk within a lonely lawn, that stood
On every side surrounded by a wood:
Alone he walk'd, to please his pensive mind,
And sought the deepest solitude to find;
'Twas in a grove of spreading pines he stray'd;
The winds within the quivering branches play'd,
And dancing trees a mournful music made.
The place itself was suiting to his care,
Uncouth and savage, as the cruel fair.
He wander'd on, unknowing where he went,
Lost in the wood, and all on love intent:
The day already half his race had run,
And summon'd him to due repast at noon;
But love could feel no hunger but his own.
Whilst listening to the murmuring leaves he stood,
More than a mile immersed within the wood,
At once the wind was laid; the whispering sound
Was dumb; a rising earthquake rock'd the ground;
With deeper brown the grove was overspread;
A sudden horror seized his giddy head,
And his ears tinkled, and his colour fled.
Nature was in alarm; some danger nigh
Seem'd threaten'd, though unseen to mortal eye.
Unused to fear, he summon'd all his soul,
And stood collected in himself, and whole;
Not long; for soon a whirlwind rose around,
And from afar he heard a screaming sound,
As of a dame distress'd, who cried for aid,
And fill'd with loud laments the secret shade.

A thicket close beside the grove there stood,
With briers and brambles choked, and dwarfish wood;
From thence the noise, which now approaching near,
With more distinguish'd notes invades his ear:
He raised his head, and saw a beauteous maid,
With hair dishevell'd, issuing through the shade;
Stripp'd of her clothes, and e'en those parts reveal'd,
Which modest nature keeps from sight conceal'd.
Her face, her hands, her naked limbs were torn,
With passing through the brakes and prickly thorn;
Two mastiffs gaunt and grim her flight pursued,
And oft their fasten'd fangs in blood imbrued;
Oft they came up, and pinch'd her tender side,
Mercy, O mercy, Heaven! she ran and cried;
When Heaven was named, they loosed their hold again,
Then sprung she forth, they follow'd her amain.
Not far behind, a knight of swarthy face,
High on a coal-black steed pursued the chase;
With flashing flames his ardent eyes were fill'd,
And in his hand a naked sword he held:
He cheer'd the dogs to follow her who fled,
And vow'd revenge on her devoted head.
As Theodore was born of noble kind,
The brutal action roused his manly mind;
Moved with unworthy usage of the maid,
He, though unarm'd, resolved to give her aid.
A sapling pine he wrench'd from out the ground,
The readiest weapon that his fury found.
Thus furnish'd for offence, he cross'd the way
Betwixt the graceless villain and his prey.
The knight came thundering on, but, from afar,
Thus, in imperious tone, forbade the war:
Cease, Theodore, to proffer vain relief,
Nor stop the vengeance of so just a grief;
But give me leave to seize my destined prey,
And let eternal justice take the way:
I but revenge my fate; disdain'd, betray'd,
And suffering death for this ungrateful maid.
He said, at once dismounting from the steed;
For now the hell-hounds, with superior speed,
Had reach'd the dame, and fastening on her side,
The ground with issuing streams of purple dyed.
Stood Theodore surprised in deadly fright,
With chattering teeth, and bristling hair upright;

Yet arm'd with inborn worth, Whate'er, said he,
Thou art, who know'st me better than I thee;
Or prove thy rightful cause, or be defied!
The spectre, fiercely staring, thus replied:—
Know, Theodore, thy ancestry I claim,
And Guido Cavalcanti was my name:
One common sire our fathers did beget;
My name and story some remember yet:
Thee, then a boy, within my arms I laid,
When for my sins, I loved this haughty maid;
Not less adored in life, nor served by me,
Than proud Honoria now is loved by thee.
What did I not her stubborn heart to gain?
But all my vows were answer'd with disdain:
She scorn'd my sorrows, and despised my pain.
Long time I dragg'd my days in fruitless care;
Then loathing life, and plunged in deep despair,
To finish my unhappy life, I fell
On this sharp sword, and now am damn'd in hell.
Short was her joy; for soon the insulting maid
By Heaven's decree in the cold grave was laid.
And, as in unrepented sin she died,
Doom'd to the same bad place, is punish'd for her pride;
Because she deem'd I well deserved to die,
And made a merit of her cruelty.
There, then, we met; both tried, and both were cast,
And this irrevocable sentence pass'd:
That she, whom I so long pursued in vain,
Should suffer from my hands a lingering pain:
Renew'd to life that she might daily die,
I daily doom'd to follow, she to fly;
No more a lover, but a mortal foe,
I seek her life (for love is none below):
As often as my dogs with better speed
Arrest her flight, is she to death decreed:
Then with this fatal sword, on which I died,
I pierce her open back, or tender side,
And tear that harden'd heart from out her breast,
Which, with her entrails, makes my hungry hounds a feast.
Nor lies she long, but as her fates ordain,
Springs up to life, and fresh to second pain,
Is saved to-day, to-morrow to be slain.
This, versed in death, the infernal knight relates,
And then for proof fulfill'd the common fates;

Her heart and bowels through her back he drew,
And fed the hounds that help'd him to pursue.
Stern look'd the fiend, as frustrate of his will,
Not half sufficed, and greedy yet to kill.
And now the soul, expiring through the wound,
Had left the body breathless on the ground,
When thus the grisly spectre spoke again:
Behold the fruit of ill-rewarded pain:
As many months as I sustain'd her hate,
So many years is she condemn'd by fate
To daily death; and every several place
Conscious of her disdain, and my disgrace,
Must witness her just punishment; and be
A scene of triumph and revenge to me.
As in this grove I took my last farewell,
As on this very spot of earth I fell,
As Friday saw me die, so she my prey
Becomes ev'n here, on this revolving day.
Thus while he spoke, the virgin from the ground
Upstarted fresh, already closed the wound,
And, unconcern'd for all she felt before,
Precipitates her flight along the shore:
The hell-hounds, as ungorged with flesh and blood,
Pursue their prey, and seek their wonted food:
The fiend remounts his courser; mends his pace,
And all the vision vanish'd from the place.
Long stood the noble youth oppress'd with awe,
And stupid at the wondrous things he saw,
Surpassing common faith, transgressing nature's law:
He would have been asleep, and wish'd to wake;
But dreams, he knew, no long impression make,
Though strong at first; if vision, to what end,
But such as must his future state portend?
His love the damsel, and himself the fiend.
But yet reflecting that it could not be
From Heaven, which cannot impious acts decree;
Resolved within himself to shun the snare,
Which hell for his destruction did prepare;
And as his better genius should direct,
From an ill cause to draw a good effect.
Inspired from Heaven, he homeward took his way,
Nor pall'd his new design with long delay:
But of his train a trusty servant sent,
To call his friends together at his tent.

They came, and usual salutations paid,
With words premeditated thus he said:
What you have often counsell'd, to remove
My vain pursuit of unregarded love,
By thrift my sinking fortune to repair,
Though late, yet is at last become my care:
My heart shall be my own; my vast expense
Reduced to bounds, by timely providence:
This only I require; invite for me
Honoria, with her father's family,
Her friends, and mine; the cause I shall display,
On Friday next; for that 's the appointed day.
Well pleased were all his friends; the task was light;
The father, mother, daughter, they invite;
Hardly the dame was drawn to this repast;
But yet resolved, because it was the last.
The day was come, the guests invited came,
And, with the rest, the inexorable dame:
A feast prepared with riotous expense,
Much cost, more care, and most magnificence.
The place ordain'd was in that haunted grove,
Where the revenging ghost pursued his love:
The tables in a proud pavilion spread,
With flowers below, and tissue overhead:
The rest in rank, Honoria chief in place,
Was artfully contrived to set her face
To front the thicket, and behold the chase.
The feast was served, the time so well forecast,
That just when the dessert and fruits were placed,
The fiend's alarm began: the hollow sound
Sung in the leaves, the forest shook around,
Air blacken'd, roll'd the thunder, groan'd the ground.
Nor long before the loud laments arise
Of one distress'd, and mastiffs' mingled cries;
And first the dame came rushing through the wood,
And next the famish'd hounds that sought their food,
And griped her flanks, and oft essay'd their jaws in blood.
Last came the felon, on his sable steed,
Arm'd with his naked sword, and urged his dogs to speed.
She ran, and cried, her flight directly bent,
(A guest unbidden) to the fatal tent,
The scene of death, and place ordain'd for punishment.
Loud was the noise, aghast was every guest,
The women shriek'd, the men forsook the feast;

The hounds at nearer distance hoarsely bay'd;
The hunter close pursued the visionary maid;
She rent the heaven with loud laments, imploring aid.
The gallants, to protect the lady's right,
Their falchions brandish'd at the grisly spright;
High on his stirrups he provoked the fight.
Then on the crowd he cast a furious look,
And wither'd all their strength before he strook:
Back, on your lives, let be, said he, my prey,
And let my vengeance take the destined way:
Vain are your arms, and vainer your defence,
Against the eternal doom of Providence:
Mine is the ungrateful maid by Heaven design'd:
Mercy she would not give, nor mercy shall she find.
At this the former tale again he told
With thundering tone, and dreadful to behold.
Sunk were their hearts with horror of the crime,
Nor needed to be warn'd a second time,
But bore each other back: some knew the face,
And all had heard the much-lamented case
Of him who fell for love, and this the fatal place.
And now the infernal minister advanced,
Seized the due victim, and with fury lanced
Her back, and piercing through her inmost heart,
Drew backward as before the offending part.
The reeking entrails next he tore away,
And to his meagre mastiffs made a prey.
The pale assistants on each other stared,
With gaping mouths for issuing words prepared:
The still-born sounds upon the palate hung,
And died imperfect on the faltering tongue.
The fright was general; but the female band
(A helpless train) in more confusion stand;
With horror shuddering, on a heap they run,
Sick at the sight of hateful justice done;
For conscience rung the alarm, and made the case their own.
So spread upon a lake, with upward eye,
A plump of fowl behold their foe on high;
They close their trembling troop; and all attend
On whom the sousing eagle will descend.
But most the proud Honoria fear'd the event,
And thought to her alone the vision sent.
Her guilt presents to her distracted mind

Heaven's justice, Theodore's revengeful kind,
And the same fate to the same sin assign'd;
Already sees herself the monster's prey,
And feels her heart and entrails torn away.
'Twas a mute scene of sorrow, mix'd with fear;
Still on the table lay the unfinish'd cheer:
The knight and hungry mastiffs stood around,
The mangled dame lay breathless on the ground:
When on a sudden, re-inspired with breath,
Again she rose, again to suffer death;
Nor staid the hell-hounds, nor the hunter staid,
But follow'd, as before, the flying maid:
The avenger took from earth the avenging sword,
And mounting light as air his sable steed he spurr'd:
The clouds dispell'd, the sky resumed her light,
And Nature stood recover'd of her fright.
  But fear, the last of ills, remain'd behind,
And horror heavy sat on every mind.
Nor Theodore encouraged more the feast,
But sternly look'd, as hatching in his breast
Some deep design; which when Honoria view'd,
The fresh impulse her former fright renew'd;
She thought herself the trembling dame who fled,
And him the grisly ghost that spurr'd the infernal steed:
The more dismay'd, for when the guests withdrew,
Their courteous host saluting all the crew,
Regardless pass'd her o'er, nor graced with kind adieu.
That sting infix'd within her haughty mind,
The downfal of her empire she divined;
And her proud heart with secret sorrow pined.
Home as they went, the sad discourse renew'd,
Of the relentless dame to death pursued,
And of the sight obscene so lately view'd.
None durst arraign the righteous doom she bore,
Ev'n they who pitied most, yet blamed her more:
The parallel they needed not to name,
But in the dead they damn'd the living dame.
  At every little noise she look'd behind,
For still the knight was present to her mind:
And anxious oft she started on the way,
And thought the horseman-ghost came thundering for his prey.
Return'd she took her bed with little rest,
But in short slumbers dreamt the funeral feast:

Awaked, she turn'd her side, and slept again;
The same black vapours mounted in her brain,
And the same dreams return'd with double pain.
Now forced to wake, because afraid to sleep,
Her blood all fever'd, with a furious leap
She sprung from bed, distracted in her mind,
And fear'd, at every step, a twitching spright behind.
Darkling and desperate, with a staggering pace,
Of death afraid, and conscious of disgrace;
Fear, pride, remorse, at once her heart assail'd,
Pride put remorse to flight, but fear prevail'd.
Friday, the fatal day, when next it came,
Her soul forethought the fiend would change his game,
And her pursue, or Theodore be slain,
And two ghosts join their packs to hunt her o'er the plain.
This dreadful image so possess'd her mind,
That desperate any succour else to find,
She ceased all farther hope; and now began
To make reflection on the unhappy man.
Rich, brave, and young, who past expression loved,
Proof to disdain, and not to be removed;
Of all the men respected and admired,
Of all the dames, except herself, desired:
Why not of her? preferr'd above the rest
By him with knightly deeds, and open love profess'd?
So had another been, where he his vows address'd.
This quell'd her pride, yet other doubts remain'd,
That once disdaining, she might be disdain'd.
The fear was just, but greater fear prevail'd,
Fear of her life by hellish hounds assail'd;
He took a lowering leave; but who can tell
What outward hate might inward love conceal;
Her sex's arts she knew, and why not, then,
Might deep dissembling have a place in men?
Here hope began to dawn; resolved to try,
She fix'd on this her utmost remedy;
Death was behind, but hard it was to die.
'Twas time enough at last on death to call,
The precipice in sight: a shrub was all
That kindly stood betwixt to break the fatal fall.
One maid she had, beloved above the rest;
Secure of her, the secret she confess'd;
And now the cheerful light her fears dispell'd,

She with no winding turns the truth conceal'd,
But put the woman off, and stood reveal'd:
With faults confess'd commission'd her to go,
If pity yet had place, and reconcile her foe.
The welcome message made, was soon received;
'Twas to be wish'd, and hoped, but scarce believed:
Fate seem'd a fair occasion to present,
He knew the sex, and fear'd she might repent
Should he delay the moment of consent.
There yet remain'd to gain her friends (a care
The modesty of maidens well might spare);
But she with such a zeal the cause embraced,
(As women, where they will, are all in haste,)
The father, mother, and the kin beside,
Were overborne by fury of the tide;
With full consent of all, she changed her state:
Resistless in her love, as in her hate.
By her example warn'd, the rest beware;
More easy, less imperious, were the fair;
And that one hunting, which the devil design'd
For one fair female, lost him half the kind.

CYMON AND IPHIGENIA.

Poeta Loquitur.

OLD as I am, for ladies' love unfit,
The power of beauty I remember yet,
Which once inflamed my soul, and still inspires my wit.
If love be folly, the severe divine*
Has felt that folly, though he censures mine;
Pollutes the pleasures of a chaste embrace,
Acts what I write, and propagates in grace,
With riotous excess, a priestly race.
Suppose him free, and that I forge the offence,
He show'd the way, perverting first my sense:
In malice witty, and with venom fraught,
He makes me speak the things I never thought.
Compute the gains of his ungovern'd zeal:
Ill suits his cloth the praise of railing well.

* Jeremy Collier.

The world will think that what we loosely write,
Though now arraign'd, he read with some delight;
Because he seems to chew the cud again,
When his broad comment makes the text too plain;
And teaches more in one explaining page,
Than all the double meanings of the stage.
What needs he paraphrase on what we mean?
We were at worst but wanton; he 's obscene.
I, nor my fellows, nor myself excuse;
But love 's the subject of the comic muse:
Nor can we write without it, nor would you
A tale of only dry instruction view.
Nor love is always of a vicious kind,
But oft to virtuous acts inflames the mind,
Awakes the sleepy vigour of the soul,
And, brushing o'er, adds motion to the pool.
Love, studious how to please, improves our parts
With polish'd manners, and adorns with arts.
Love first invented verse, and form'd the rhyme,
The motion measured, harmonised the chime;
To liberal acts enlarged the narrow-soul'd,
Soften'd the fierce, and made the coward bold:
The world, when waste, he peopled with increase,
And warring nations reconciled in peace.
Ormond, the first, and all the fair may find,
In this one legend, to their fame design'd,
When beauty fires the blood, how love exalts the mind.

In that sweet isle where Venus keeps her court,
And every grace, and all the loves resort;
Where either sex is form'd of softer earth,
And takes the bent of pleasure from their birth;
There lived a Cyprian lord, above the rest
Wise, wealthy, with a numerous issue bless'd;
But, as no gift of fortune is sincere,
Was only wanting in a worthy heir:
His eldest born, a goodly youth to view,
Excell'd the rest in shape and outward show;
Fair, tall, his limbs with due proportion join'd,
But of a heavy, dull, degenerate mind.
His soul belied the features of his face;
Beauty was there, but beauty in disgrace;

A clownish mien, a voice with rustic sound,
And stupid eyes that ever loved the ground.
He look'd like nature's error, as the mind
And body were not of a piece design'd,
But made for two, and by mistake in one were join'd.
The ruling rod, the father's forming care,
Were exercised in vain on wit's despair;
The more inform'd, the less he understood,
And deeper sunk by floundering in the mud.
Now scorn'd of all, and grown the public shame,
The people from Galesus changed his name,
And Cymon call'd, which signifies a brute;
So well his name did with his nature suit.
His father, when he found his labour lost,
And care employ'd, that answer'd not the cost,
Chose an ungrateful object to remove,
And loathed to see what nature made him love;
So to his country-farm the fool confined;
Rude work well suited with a rustic mind.
Thus to the wilds the sturdy Cymon went,
A squire among the swains, and pleased with banishment.
His corn and cattle were his only care,
And his supreme delight, a country fair.
It happen'd on a summer's holiday,
That to the greenwood-shade he took his way;
For Cymon shunn'd the church, and used not much to pray.
His quarter-staff, which he could ne'er forsake,
Hung half before, and half behind his back.
He trudged along, unknowing what he sought,
And whistled as he went for want of thought.
By chance conducted, or by thirst constrain'd,
The deep recesses of the grove he gain'd;
Where in a plain, defended by the wood,
Crept through the matted grass a crystal flood,
By which an alabaster fountain stood;
And on the margin of the fount was laid
(Attended by her slaves) a sleeping maid:
Like Dian and her nymphs, when, tired with sport,
To rest by cool Eurotas they resort:
The dame herself the goddess well express'd,
Not more distinguish'd by her purple vest,
Than by the charming features of her face,
And, even in slumber, a superior grace:

Her comely limbs composed with decent care,
Her body shaded with a slight cymar:
Her bosom to the view was only bare;
Where two beginning paps were scarcely spied,
For yet their places were but signified.
The fanning wind upon her bosom blows,
To meet the fanning wind the bosom rose;
The fanning wind, and purling streams, continue her repose.
The fool of nature stood with stupid eyes,
And gaping mouth, that testified surprise,
Fix'd on her face, nor could remove his sight;
New as he was to love, and novice to delight:
Long mute he stood, and leaning on his staff,
His wonder witness'd with an idiot laugh;
Then would have spoke, but by his glimmering sense
First found his want of words, and fear'd offence;
Doubted for what he was he should be known,
By his clown accent, and his country tone.
Through the rude chaos thus the running light
Shot the first ray that pierced the native night:
Then day and darkness in the mass were mix'd,
Till gather'd in a globe the beams were fix'd:
Last shone the sun, who, radiant in his sphere,
Illumined heaven and earth, and roll'd around the year.
So reason in this brutal soul began:
Love made him first suspect he was a man;
Love made him doubt his broad barbarian sound;
By love his want of words, and wit, he found;
That sense of want prepared the future way
To knowledge, and disclosed the promise of a day.
What not his father's care, nor tutor's art,
Could plant with pains in his unpolish'd heart,
The best instructor, Love, at once inspired,
As barren grounds to fruitfulness are fired:
Love taught him shame, and shame, with love at strife,
Soon taught the sweet civilities of life.
His gross material soul at once could find
Somewhat in her excelling all her kind;
Exciting a desire till then unknown,
Somewhat unfound, or found in her alone.
This made the first impression on his mind,
Above, but just above, the brutal kind:
For beasts can like, but not distinguish too,
Nor their own liking by reflection know;

Nor why they like or this or t' other face,
Or judge of this or that peculiar grace;
But love in gross, and stupidly admire;
As flies, allured by light, approach the fire.
Thus our man-beast, advancing by degrees,
First likes the whole, then separates what he sees;
On several parts a several praise bestows,
The ruby lips, the well-proportion'd nose,
The snowy skin, and raven-glossy hair,
The dimpled cheek, and forehead rising fair,
And even in sleep itself, a smiling air.
From thence his eyes descending view'd the rest,
Her plump round arms, white hands, and heaving breast.
Long on the last he dwelt, though every part
A pointed arrow sped to pierce his heart.
Thus in a trice a judge of beauty grown,
(A judge erected from a country clown)
He long'd to see her eyes, in slumber hid,
And wish'd his own could pierce within the lid:
He would have waked her, but restrain'd his thought,
And Love, new-born, the first good manners taught.
An awful fear his ardent wish withstood,
Nor durst disturb the goddess of the wood.
For such she seem'd by her celestial face,
Excelling all the rest of human race:
And things divine, by common sense he knew,
Must be devoutly seen, at distant view.
So checking his desire, with trembling heart
Gazing he stood, nor would nor could depart;
Fix'd as a pilgrim wilder'd in his way,
Who dares not stir by night for fear to stray,
But stands with awful eyes to watch the dawn of day.
At length awaking, Iphigene the fair,
(So was the beauty call'd, who caused his care,)
Unclosed her eyes, and double day reveal'd,
While those of all her slaves in sleep were seal'd.
The slavering cudden, propp'd upon his staff,
Stood ready gaping with a grinning laugh,
To welcome her awake, nor durst begin
To speak, but wisely kept the fool within.
Then she:—What make you, Cymon, here alone?
(For Cymon's name was round the country known,
Because descended of a noble race,
And for a soul ill sorted with his face.)

But still the sot stood silent with surprise,
With fix'd regard on her new-open'd eyes,
And in his breast received the envenom'd dart,
A tickling pain that pleased amid the smart.
But conscious of her form, with quick distrust
She saw his sparkling eyes, and fear'd his brutal lust.
This to prevent, she waked her sleepy crew,
And rising hasty, took a short adieu.
Then Cymon first his rustic voice essay'd,
With proffer'd service to the parting maid
To see her safe; his hand she long denied,
But took at length, ashamed of such a guide.
So Cymon led her home, and leaving there,
No more would to his country clowns repair,
But sought his father's house, with better mind,
Refusing in the farm to be confined.
The father wonder'd at the son's return,
And knew not whether to rejoice or mourn;
But doubtfully received, expecting still
To learn the secret causes of his alter'd will.
Nor was he long delay'd: the first request
He made, was, like his brothers to be dress'd,
And, as his birth required, above the rest.
With ease his suit was granted by his sire,
Distinguishing his heir by rich attire.
His body thus adorn'd, he next design'd
With liberal arts to cultivate his mind:
He sought a tutor of his own accord,
And studied lessons he before abhorr'd.
Thus the man-child advanced, and learn'd so fast,
That in short time his equals he surpass'd:
His brutal manners from his breast exiled,
His mien he fashion'd, and his tongue he filed;
In every exercise of all admired,
He seem'd, nor only seem'd, but was inspired:
Inspired by love, whose business is to please;
He rode, he fenced, he moved with graceful ease,
More famed for sense, for courtly carriage more,
Than for his brutal folly known before.
What then of alter'd Cymon shall we say,
But that the fire which choked in ashes lay,
A load too heavy for his soul to move,
Was upward blown below, and brush'd away by love.

Love made an active progress through his mind,
The dusky parts he clear'd, the gross refined,
The drowsy waked; and, as he went, impress'd
The Maker's image on the human breast.
Thus was the man amended by desire,
And though he loved perhaps with too much fire,
His father all his faults with reason scann'd,
And liked an error of the better hand;
Excused the excess of passion in his mind,
By flames too fierce, perhaps too much refined.
So Cymon, since his sire indulged his will,
Impetuous loved, and would be Cymon still;
Galesus he disown'd, and chose to bear
The name of fool confirm'd, and bishop'd by the fair.
To Cipseus by his friends his suit he moved;
Cipseus the father of the fair he loved:
But he was pre-engaged by former ties,
While Cymon was endeavouring to be wise:
And Iphigene, obliged by former vows,
Had given her faith to wed a foreign spouse.
Her sire and she to Rhodian Pasimond,
Though both repenting, were by promise bound,
Nor could retract; and thus, as fate decreed,
Though better loved, he spoke too late to speed.
The doom was past, the ship already sent
Did all his tardy diligence prevent:
Sigh'd to herself the fair unhappy maid,
While stormy Cymon thus in secret said:
The time is come for Iphigene to find
The miracle she wrought upon my mind:
Her charms have made me man, her ravish'd love
In rank shall place me with the bless'd above;
For mine by love, by force she shall be mine,
Or death, if force should fail, shall finish my design.
Resolved he said; and rigg'd with speedy care
A vessel strong, and well equipp'd for war.
The secret ship with chosen friends he stored;
And bent to die, or conquer, went aboard.
Ambush'd he lay behind the Cyprian shore,
Waiting the sail that all his wishes bore;
Nor long expected, for the following tide
Sent out the hostile ship and beauteous bride.
To Rhodes the rival bark directly steer'd,
When Cymon sudden at her back appear'd,

And stopp'd her flight: then standing on his prow
In haughty terms he thus defied the foe:—
Or strike your sails at summons, or prepare
To prove the last extremities of war.
Thus warn'd, the Rhodians for the fight provide;
Already were the vessels side by side,
These obstinate to save, and those to seize the bride.
But Cymon soon his crooked grapples cast,
Which with tenacious hold his foes embraced,
And, arm'd with sword and shield, amid the press he pass'd.
Fierce was the fight, but hastening to his prey,
By force the furious lover freed his way:
Himself alone dispersed the Rhodian crew,
The weak disdain'd, the valiant overthrew;
Cheap conquest for his following friends remain'd,
He reap'd the field, and they but only glean'd.
His victory confess'd, the foes retreat,
And cast their weapons at the victor's feet.
Whom thus he cheer'd: O Rhodian youth, I fought
For love alone, nor other booty sought:
Your lives are safe; your vessel I resign,
Yours be your own, restoring what is mine.
In Iphigene I claim my rightful due,
Robb'd by my rival, and detain'd by you:
Your Pasimond a lawless bargain drove;
The parent could not sell the daughter's love;
Or if he could, my love disdains the laws,
And like a king by conquest gains his cause:
Where arms take place, all other pleas are vain;
Love taught me force, and force shall love maintain.
You, what by strength you could not keep, release;
And at an easy ransom buy your peace.
Fear on the conquer'd side soon sign'd the accord,
And Iphigene to Cymon was restored:
While to his arms the blushing bride he took,
To seeming sadness she composed her look,
As if by force subjected to his will;
Though pleased, dissembling, and a woman still.
And, (for she wept,) he wiped her falling tears,
And pray'd her to dismiss her empty fears;
For yours I am, he said, and have deserved
Your love much better, whom so long I served,
Than he to whom your formal father tied
Your vows; and sold a slave, not sent a bride.

Thus while he spoke, he seized the willing prey,
As Paris bore the Spartan spouse away.
Faintly she scream'd, and even her eyes confess'd
She rather would be thought, than was, distress'd.
Who now exults but Cymon in his mind?
Vain hopes and empty joys of human kind,
Proud of the present, to the future blind!
Secure of fate, while Cymon ploughs the sea,
And steers to Candy with his conquer'd prey,
Scarce the third glass of measured hours was run,
When like a fiery meteor sunk the sun;
The promise of a storm; the shifting gales
Forsake, by fits, and fill, the flagging sails:
Hoarse murmurs of the main from far were heard,
And night came on, not by degrees prepared,
But all at once; at once the winds arise,
The thunders roll, the forky lightning flies.
In vain the master issues out commands,
In vain the trembling sailors ply their hands:
The tempest unforeseen prevents their care,
And from the first they labour in despair.
The giddy ship betwixt the winds and tides,
Forced back and forwards, in a circle rides,
Stunn'd with the different blows; then shoots amain,
Till counterbuff'd, she stops, and sleeps again.
Not more aghast the proud archangel fell,
Plunged from the height of heaven to deepest hell,
Than stood the lover of his love possess'd,
Now cursed the more, the more he had been bless'd;
More anxious for her danger, than his own,
Death he defies, but would be lost alone.
Sad Iphigene to womanish complaints
Adds pious prayers, and wearies all the saints;
Even, if she could, her love she would repent,
But since she cannot, dreads the punishment:
Her forfeit faith, and Pasimond betray'd,
Are ever present, and her crime upbraid.
She blames herself, nor blames her lover less,
Augments her anger, as her fears increase;
From her own back the burden would remove,
And lays the load on his ungovern'd love,
Which interposing durst, in Heaven's despite,
Invade and violate another's right:

The Powers incensed, a while deferr'd his pain,
And made him master of his vows in vain:
But soon they punish'd his presumptuous pride;
That for his daring enterprise she died,
Who rather not resisted than complied.
Then impotent of mind, with alter'd sense,
She hugg'd the offender, and forgave the offence;
Sex to the last. Meantime with sails declined
The wandering vessel drove before the wind;
Toss'd and retoss'd, aloft, and then alow,
Nor port they seek, nor certain course they know,
But every moment wait the coming blow.
Thus blindly driven, by breaking day they view'd
The land before them, and their fears renew'd;
The land was welcome, but the tempest bore
The threaten'd ship against a rocky shore.
A winding bay was near; to this they bent,
And just escaped; their force already spent:
Secure from storms, and panting from the sea,
The land unknown at leisure they survey;
And saw (but soon their sickly sight withdrew)
The rising towers of Rhodes at distant view;
And cursed the hostile shore of Pasimond,
Saved from the seas, and shipwreck'd on the ground.
The frighted sailors tried their strength in vain,
To turn the stern, and tempt the stormy main;
But the stiff wind withstood the labouring oar,
And forced them forward on the fatal shore!
The crooked keel now bites the Rhodian strand,
And the ship moor'd, constrains the crew to land
Yet still they might be safe, because unknown;
But, as ill fortune seldom comes alone,
The vessel they dismiss'd was driven before,
Already shelter'd on their native shore;
Known each, they know; but each with change of cheer;
The vanquish'd side exults; the victors fear
Not them but theirs, made prisoners ere they fight,
Despairing conquest, and deprived of flight.
The country rings around with loud alarms,
And raw in fields the rude militia swarms;
Mouths without hands; maintain'd at vast expense,
In peace a charge, in war a weak defence:

Stout once a month they march, a blustering band,
And ever, but in times of need, at hand.
This was the morn, when, issuing on the guard,
Drawn up in rank and file they stood prepared
Of seeming arms to make a short essay,
Then hasten to be drunk, the business of the day.
The cowards would have fled, but that they knew
Themselves so many, and their foes so few;
But, crowding on, the last the first impel;
Till overborne with weight the Cyprians fell.
Cymon enslaved, who first the war begun,
And Iphigene once more is lost and won.
Deep in a dungeon was the captive cast,
Deprived of day, and held in fetters fast;
His life was only spared at their request,
Whom taken he so nobly had released:
But Iphigenia was the ladies' care,
Each in their turn address'd to treat the fair;
While Pasimond and his the nuptial feast prepare.
Her secret soul to Cymon was inclined,
But she must suffer what her fates assign'd;
So passive is the church of womankind!
What worse to Cymon could his fortune deal,
Roll'd to the lowest spoke of all her wheel?
It rested to dismiss the downward weight,
Or raise him upward to his former height;
The latter pleased; and love (concern'd the most)
Prepared the amends for what by love he lost.
The sire of Pasimond had left a son,
Though younger, yet for courage early known,
Ormisda call'd; to whom by promise tied,
A Rhodian beauty was the destined bride;
Cassandra was her name; above the rest
Renown'd for birth, with fortune amply bless'd.
Lysimachus, who ruled the Rhodian state,
Was then by choice their annual magistrate:
He loved Cassandra too with equal fire,
But fortune had not favour'd his desire;
Cross'd by her friends, by her not disapproved,
Nor yet preferr'd, or like Ormisda loved:
So stood the affair: some little hope remain'd,
That should his rival chance to lose, he gain'd.
Meantime young Pasimond his marriage press'd,
Ordain'd the nuptial day, prepared the feast;

And frugally resolved (the charge to shun,
Which would be double should he wed alone)
To join his brother's bridal with his own.
Lysimachus, oppress'd with mortal grief,
Received the news, and studied quick relief.
The fatal day approach'd; if force were used,
The magistrate his public trust abused;
To justice liable, as law required;
For when his office ceased, his power expired:
While power remain'd, the means were in his hand
By force to seize, and then forsake the land.
Betwixt extremes he knew not how to move,
A slave to fame, but more a slave to love:
Restraining others, yet himself not free,
Made impotent by power, debased by dignity.
Both sides he weigh'd: but after much debate,
The man prevail'd above the magistrate.
Love never fails to master what he finds,
But works a different way in different minds,
The fool enlightens, and the wise he blinds.
This youth proposing to possess and 'scape,
Began in murder, to conclude in rape:
Unpraised by me, though Heaven sometimes may bless
An impious act with undeserved success:
The great, it seems, are privileged alone
To punish all injustice but their own.
But here I stop, not daring to proceed,
Yet blush to flatter an unrighteous deed:
For crimes are but permitted, not decreed.
Resolved on force, his wit the prætor bent,
To find the means that might secure the event;
Nor long he labour'd, for his lucky thought
In captive Cymon found the friend he sought.
The example pleased: the cause and crime the same;
An injured lover, and a ravish'd dame.
How much he durst he knew by what he dared,
The less he had to lose, the less he cared
To manage loathsome life, when love was the reward.
This ponder'd well, and fix'd on his intent,
In depth of night he for the prisoner sent;
In secret sent the public view to shun,
Then with a sober smile he thus begun:
The Powers above, who bounteously bestow
Their gifts and graces on mankind below,

Yet prove our merit first; nor blindly give
To such as are not worthy to receive:
For valour and for virtue they provide
Their due reward, but first they must be tried.
These fruitful seeds within your mind they sow'd,
'Twas yours to improve the talent they bestow'd:
They gave you to be born of noble kind,
They gave you love to lighten up your mind,
And purge the grosser parts: they gave you care
To please, and courage to deserve the fair.
Thus far they tried you, and by proof they found
The grain entrusted in a grateful ground:
But still the great experiment remain'd.
They suffer'd you to lose the prize you gain'd;
That you might learn the gift was theirs alone:
And when restored, to them the blessing own.
Restored it soon will be; the means prepared,
The difficulty smooth'd, the danger shared:
Be but yourself, the care to me resign,
Then Iphigene is yours, Cassandra mine.
Your rival Pasimond pursues your life,
Impatient to revenge his ravish'd wife,
But yet not his; to-morrow is behind,
And Love our fortunes in one band has join'd:
Two brothers are our foes; Ormisda mine,
As much declared, as Pasimond is thine:
To-morrow must their common vows be tied;
With love to friend, and fortune for our guide,
Let both resolve to die, or each redeem a bride.
Right I have none, nor hast thou much to plead;
'Tis force, when done, must justify the deed:
Our task perform'd, we next prepare for flight;
And let the losers talk in vain of right:
We with the fair will sail before the wind,
If they are grieved, I leave the laws behind.
Speak thy resolves; if now thy courage droop,
Despair in prison, and abandon hope;
But if thou dar'st in arms thy love regain,
(For liberty without thy love were vain)
Then second my design to seize the prey:
Or lead to second rape, for well thou know'st the way.
Said Cymon overjoy'd, Do thou propose
The means to fight, and only show the foes:

For from the first, when love had fired my mind,
Resolved I left the care of life behind.
To this the bold Lysimachus replied,
Let Heaven be neuter, and the sword decide;
The spousals are prepared, already play
The minstrels, and provoke the tardy day:
By this, the brides are waked, their grooms are dress'd
All Rhodes is summon'd to the nuptial feast,
All but myself, the sole unbidden guest.
Unbidden though I am, I will be there,
And, join'd by thee, intend to joy the fair.
Now hear the rest; when day resigns the light,
And cheerful torches gild the jolly night,
Be ready at my call; my chosen few
With arms administer'd shall aid thy crew.
Then entering unexpected will we seize
Our destin'd prey, from men dissolved in ease,
By wine disabled, unprepared for fight;
And hastening to the seas, suborn our flight:
The seas are ours, for I command the fort,
A ship well mann'd expects us in the port:
If they, or if their friends, the prize contest,
Death shall attend the man who dares resist.
It pleased! the prisoner to his hold retired,
His troop with equal emulation fired,
All fix'd to fight, and all their wonted work required.
The sun arose; the streets were throng'd around,
The palace open'd, and the posts were crown'd:
The double bridegroom at the door attends
The expected spouse, and entertains the friends.
They meet, they lead to church; the priests invoke
The Powers, and feed the flames with fragrant smoke.
This done, they feast; and at the close of night
By kindled torches vary their delight,
These lead the lively dance, and those the brimming bowls invite.
Now, at the appointed place and hour assign'd,
With souls resolved the ravishers were join'd.
Three bands are form'd: the first is sent before
To favour the retreat, and guard the shore;
The second at the palace-gate is placed,
And up the lofty stairs ascend the last:
A peaceful troop they seem with shining vests,
But coats of mail beneath secure their breasts.

Dauntless they enter, Cymon at their head,
And find the feast renew'd, the table spread:
Sweet voices, mix'd with instrumental sounds,
Ascend the vaulted roof, the vaulted roof rebounds:
When, like the harpies, rushing through the hall
The sudden troop appears, the tables fall,
Their smoking load is on the pavement thrown;
Each ravisher prepares to seize his own:
The brides, invaded with a rude embrace,
Shriek out for aid, confusion fills the place:
Quick to redeem the prey their plighted lords
Advance, the palace gleams with shining swords.
But late is all defence, and succour vain;
The rape is made, the ravishers remain:
Two sturdy slaves were only sent before,
To bear the purchased prize in safety to the shore.
The troop retires, the lovers close the rear,
With forward faces not confessing fear:
Backward they move, but scorn their pace to mend;
Then seek the stairs, and with slow haste descend.
Fierce Pasimond, their passage to prevent,
Thrust full on Cymon's back in his descent;
The blade return'd unbathed, and to the handle bent:
Stout Cymon soon remounts, and cleft in two
His rival's head with one descending blow:
And as the next in rank Ormisda stood,
He turn'd the point; the sword, inured to blood,
Bored his unguarded breast, which pour'd a purple flood.
With vow'd revenge the gathering crowd pursues,
The ravishers turn head, the fight renews;
The hall is heap'd with corpse; the sprinkled gore
Besmears the walls, and floats the marble floor.
Dispersed at length the drunken squadron flies,
The victors to their vessel bear the prize,
And hear behind loud groans, and lamentable cries.
The crew with merry shouts their anchors weigh,
Then ply their oars, and brush the buxom sea;
While troops of gather'd Rhodians crowd the quay.
What should the people do when left alone?
The governor and government are gone.
The public wealth to foreign parts convey'd;
Some troops disbanded, and the rest unpaid.
Rhodes the sovereign of the seas no more;
Their ships unrigg'd, and spent their naval store;

They neither could defend, nor can pursue,
But grind their teeth, and cast a helpless view:
In vain with darts a distant war they try;
Short, and more short, the missive weapons fly.
Meanwhile the ravishers their crimes enjoy,
And flying sails and sweeping oars employ;
The cliffs of Rhodes in little space are lost,
Jove's isle they seek, nor Jove denies his coast.
In safety landed on the Candian shore,
With generous wines their spirits they restore:
There Cymon with his Rhodian friend resides;
Both court, and wed, at once the willing brides.
A war ensues, the Cretans own their cause,
Stiff to defend their hospitable laws:
Both parties lose by turns; and neither wins,
Till peace propounded by a truce begins.
The kindred of the slain forgive the deed,
But a short exile must for show precede;
The term expired, from Candia they remove,
And happy each, at home, enjoys his love.

PROLOGUES AND EPILOGUES.

Prologues.

TO "THE RIVAL LADIES."

'Tis much desired, you judges of the town
Would pass a vote to put all prologues down;
For who can show me, since they first were writ,
They e'er converted one hard-hearted wit?
Yet the world's mended well; in former days
Good prologues were as scarce as now good plays.
For the reforming poets of our age,
In this first charge, spend their poetic rage:
Expect no more when once the prologue's done;
The wit is ended ere the play's begun.
You now have habits, dances, scenes, and rhymes;
High language often; ay, and sense, sometimes.
As for a clear contrivance, doubt it not;
They blow out candles to give light to th' plot.
And for surprise, two bloody-minded men
Fight till they die, then rise and dance again.
Such deep intrigues you're welcome to this day:
But blame yourselves, not him who writ the play;
Though his plot's dull, as can be well desired,
Wit stiff as any you have e'er admired:
He's bound to please, not to write well; and knows,
There is a mode in plays as well as clothes;
Therefore, kind judges——

A SECOND PROLOGUE ENTERS.

2. Hold; would you admit
For judges all you see within the pit?

1. Whom would he then except, or on what score?

2. All who (like him) have writ ill plays before;
For they, like thieves condemn'd, are hangmen made,
To execute the members of their trade.
All that are writing now he would disown,
But then he must except—even all the town;
All choleric, losing gamesters, who, in spite,
Will damn to-day, because they lost last night;

All servants, whom their mistress' scorn upbraids ;
All maudlin lovers, and all slighted maids ;
All, who are out of humour, or severe ;
All, that want wit, or hope to find it here.

TO "THE INDIAN QUEEN."

As the music plays a soft air, the curtain rises slowly, and discovers an Indian boy and girl sleeping under two plantain-trees ; and, when the curtain is almost up, the music turns into a tune expressing an alarm, at which the boy awakes, and speaks :

BOY.

WAKE, wake, Quevira ! our soft rest must cease,
And fly together with our country's peace !
No more must we sleep under plantain shade,
Which neither heat could pierce, nor cold invade ;
Where bounteous nature never feels decay,
And opening buds drive falling fruits away.

QUEVIRA.

Why should men quarrel here, where all possess
As much as they can hope for by success ?—
None can have most, where nature is so kind,
As to exceed man's use, though not his mind.

BOY.

By ancient prophecies we have been told,
Our world shall be subdued by one more old ;—
And, see, that world already's hither come.

QUEVIRA.

If these be they, we welcome then our doom !
Their looks are such, that mercy flows from thence,
More gentle than our native innocence.

BOY.

Why should we then fear these, our enemies,
That rather seem to us like deities ?

QUEVIRA.

By their protection, let us beg to live ;
They came not here to conquer, but forgive.—
If so, your goodness may your power express,
And we shall judge both best by our success.

TO "SIR MARTIN MARR-ALL."

Fools, which each man meets in his dish each day,
Are yet the great regalios of a play;
In which to poets you but just appear,
To prize that highest, which cost them so dear:
Fops in the town more easily will pass;
One story makes a statutable ass:
But such in plays must be much thicker sown,
Like yolks of eggs, a dozen beat to one.
Observing poets all their walks invade,
As men watch woodcocks gliding through a glade:
And when they have enough for comedy,
They stow their several bodies in a pie:
The poet's but the cook to fashion it,
For gallants, you yourselves have found the wit.
To bid you welcome, would your bounty wrong;
None welcome those who bring their cheer along.

TO "THE TEMPEST."

As when a tree's cut down, the secret root
Lives under ground, and thence new branches shoot;
So from old Shakspeare's honour'd dust, this day
Springs up and buds a new-reviving play:
Shakspeare, who (taught by none) did first impart
To Fletcher wit—to labouring Jonson art.
He, monarch-like, gave those, his subjects, law;
And is that nature which they paint and draw.
Fletcher reach'd that which on his heights did grow,
While Jonson crept, and gather'd all below.
This did his love, and this his mirth, digest:
One imitates him most, the other best.
If they have since outwrit all other men,
'Tis with the drops which fell from Shakspeare's pen.
The storm, which vanish'd on the neighbouring shore,
Was taught by Shakspeare's Tempest first to roar.
That innocence and beauty, which did smile
In Fletcher, grew on this enchanted isle.
But Shakspeare's magic could not copied be;
Within that circle none durst walk but he.

I must confess 'twas bold, nor would you now
That liberty to vulgar wits allow,
Which works by magic supernatural things:
But Shakspeare's power is sacred as a king's.
Those legends from old priesthood were received,
And he then writ as people then believed.
But if for Shakspeare we your grace implore,
We for our theatre shall want it more:
Who, by our dearth of youths, are forced to employ
One of our women to present a boy;
And that's a transformation, you will say,
Exceeding all the magic in the play.
Let none expect, in the last act, to find
Her sex transform'd from man to woman-kind.
Whate'er she was before the play began,
All you shall see of her is perfect man.
Or, if your fancy will be farther led
To find her woman—it must be a-bed.

TO "TYRANNIC LOVE."

SELF-LOVE, which, never rightly understood,
Makes poets still conclude their plays are good,
And malice, in all critics, reigns so high,
That for small errors, they whole plays decry;
So that to see this fondness, and that spite,
You'd think that none but madmen judge or write.
Therefore our poet, as he thinks not fit
To impose upon you what he writes for wit;
So hopes, that, leaving you your censures free,
You equal judges of the whole will be:
They judge but half, who only faults will see.
Poets, like lovers, should be bold and dare,
They spoil their business with an over-care;
And he, who servilely creeps after sense,
Is safe, but ne'er will reach an excellence.
Hence 'tis, our poet, in his conjuring,
Allow'd his fancy the full scope and swing.
But when a tyrant for his theme he had,
He loosed the reins, and bid his muse run

And though he stumbles in a full career,
Yet rashness is a better fault than fear.
He saw his way; but in so swift a pace,
To choose the ground might be to lose the race.
They then, who of each trip the advantage take,
Find but those faults, which they want wit to make.

SPOKEN THE FIRST DAY OF THE KING'S HOUSE ACTING AFTER THE FIRE.

So shipwreck'd passengers escape to land,
So look they, when on the bare beach they stand
Dropping and cold, and their first fear scarce o'er,
Expecting famine on a desert shore.
From that hard climate we must wait for bread,
Whence e'en the natives, forced by hunger, fled.
Our stage does human chance present to view,
But ne'er before was seen so sadly true:
You are changed too, and your pretence to see
Is but a nobler name for charity.
Your own provisions furnish out our feasts,
While you the founders make yourselves the guests.
Of all mankind beside fate had some care,
But for poor Wit no portion did prepare,
'Tis left a rent-charge to the brave and fair.
You cherish'd it, and now its fall you mourn,
Which blind unmanner'd zealots make their scorn,
Who think that fire a judgment on the stage,
Which spared not temples in its furious rage.
But as our new-built city rises higher,
So from old theatres may new aspire,
Since fate contrives magnificence by fire.
Our great metropolis does far surpass
Whate'er is now, and equals all that was:
Our wit as far does foreign wit excel,
And, like a king, should in a palace dwell.
But we with golden hopes are vainly fed,
Talk high, and entertain you in a shed:
Your presence here, for which we humbly sue,
Will grace old theatres, and build up new.

TO "AMBOYNA."

As needy gallants in the scriveners' hands,
Court the rich knave that gripes their mortgaged lands,
The first fat buck of all the season's sent,
And keeper takes no fee in compliment:
The dotage of some Englishmen is such,
To fawn on those who ruin them—the Dutch.
They shall have all, rather than make a war
With those who of the same religion are.
The Straits, the Guinea trade, the herrings too,
Nay, to keep friendship, they shall pickle you.
Some are resolved not to find out the cheat,
But, cuckold-like, love him who does the feat:
What injuries soe'er upon us fall,
Yet, still, the same religion answers all:
Religion wheedled you to civil war,
Drew English blood, and Dutchmen's now would spare:
Be gull'd no longer, for you'll find it true,
They have no more religion, faith—than you;
Interest's the god they worship in their state;
And you, I take it, have not much of that.
Well, monarchies may own religion's name,
But states are atheists in their very frame.
They share a sin, and such proportions fall,
That, like a stink, 'tis nothing to them all.
How they love England, you shall see this day;
No map shows Holland truer than our play:
Their pictures and inscriptions well we know;
We may be bold one medal sure to show.
View then their falsehoods, rapine, cruelty;
And think what once they were, they still would be:
But hope not either language, plot, or art;
'Twas writ in haste, but with an English heart:
And least hope wit; in Dutchmen that would be
As much improper, as would honesty.

SPOKEN AT THE OPENING OF THE NEW HOUSE,

MARCH 26, 1674.

A PLAIN built house, after so long a stay,
Will send you half unsatisfied away;
When, fall'n from your expected pomp, you find
A bare convenience only is design'd.
You, who each day can theatres behold,
Like Nero's palace, shining all with gold,
Our mean ungilded stage will scorn, we fear,
And, for the homely room, disdain the cheer.
Yet now cheap druggets to a mode are grown,
And a plain suit, since we can make but one,
Is better than to be by tarnish'd gaudry known.
They, who are by your favours wealthy made,
With mighty sums may carry on the trade:
We, broken bankers, half destroy'd by fire,
With our small stock to humble roofs retire:
Pity our loss, while you their pomp admire.
For fame and honour we no longer strive,
We yield in both, and only beg to live:
Unable to support their vast expense,
Who build and treat with such magnificence;
That, like the ambitious monarchs of the age,
They give the law to our provincial stage.
Great neighbours enviously promote excess,
While they impose their splendour on the less.
But only fools, and they of vast estate,
The extremity of modes will imitate,
The dangling knee-fringe, and the bib-cravat.
Yet if some pride with want may be allow'd,
We in our plainness may be justly proud:
Our royal master will'd it should be so;
Whate'er he 's pleased to own, can need no show:
That sacred name gives ornament and grace,
And, like his stamp, makes basest metals pass.
'Twere folly now a stately pile to raise,
To build a playhouse while you throw down plays,
While scenes, machines, and empty operas reign,
And for the pencil you the pen disdain:
While troops of famish'd Frenchmen hither drive,
And laugh at those upon whose alms they live:

Old English authors vanish and give place
To these new conquerors of the Norman race.
More tamely than your fathers you submit;
You're now grown vassals to them in your wit.
Mark, when they play, how our fine fops advance
The mighty merits of their men of France,
Keep time, cry *Bon!* and humour the cadence.
Well, please yourselves; but sure 'tis understood,
That French machines have ne'er done England good.
I would not prophesy our house's fate:
But while vain shows and scenes you over-rate,
'Tis to be feared———
That as a fire the former house o'erthrew,
Machines and tempests will destroy the new.

TO THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD, 1674.

SPOKEN BY MR. HART.

POETS, your subjects, have their parts assign'd
To unbend, and to divert their sovereign's mind:
When tired with following nature, you think fit
To seek repose in the cool shades of wit,
And, from the sweet retreat, with joy survey
What rests, and what is conquer'd, of the way.
Here, free yourselves from envy, care, and strife,
You view the various turns of human life:
Safe in our scene, through dangerous courts you go,
And, undebauch'd, the vice of cities know.
Your theories are here to practice brought,
As in mechanic operations wrought;
And man, the little world, before you set,
As once the sphere of crystal show'd the great.
Blest sure are you above all mortal kind,
If to your fortunes you can suit your mind:
Content to see, and shun, those ills we show,
And crimes on theatres alone to know.
With joy we bring what our dead authors writ,
And beg from you the value of their wit:
That Shakspeare's, Fletcher's, and great Jonson's claim
May be renew'd from those who gave them fame.
None of our living poets dare appear;
For muses so severe are worshipp'd here,

That, conscious of their faults, they shun the eye,
And, as profane, from sacred places fly,
Rather than see the offended God, and die.
We bring no imperfections, but our own;
Such faults as made are by the makers shown:
And you have been so kind, that we may boast,
The greatest judges still can pardon most.
Poets may stoop, when they would please our pit,
Debased even to the level of their wit;
Disdaining that, which yet they know will take,
Hating themselves what their applause must make.
But when to praise from you they would aspire,
Though they like eagles mount, your Jove is higher.
So far your knowledge all their power transcends,
As what *should* be beyond what *is* extends.

TO "CIRCE."

[BY DR. DAVENANT, 1675.]

WERE you but half so wise as you 're severe,
Our youthful poet should not need to fear:
To his green years your censures you would suit,
Not blast the blossom, but expect the fruit.
The sex, that best does pleasure understand,
Will always choose to err on t' other hand.
They check him not that 's awkward in delight,
But clap the young rogue's cheek, and set him right.
Thus hearten'd well, and flesh'd upon his prey,
The youth may prove a man another day.
Your Ben and Fletcher, in their first young flight,
Did no Volpone, nor no Arbaces write;
But hopp'd about, and short excursions made
From bough to bough, as if they were afraid,
And each was guilty of some Slighted Maid.
Shakspeare's own Muse her Pericles first bore;
The Prince of Tyre was elder than the Moor:
'Tis miracle to see a first good play;
All hawthorns do not bloom on Christmas-day.
A slender poet must have time to grow,
And spread and burnish as his brothers do.

Who still looks lean, sure with some mark is cursed;
But no man can be Falstaff-fat at first.
Then damn not, but indulge his rude essays,
Encourage him, and bloat him up with praise,
That he may get more bulk before he dies;
He 's not yet fed enough for sacrifice.
Perhaps, if now your grace you will not grudge,
He may grow up to write, and you to judge.

TO "AURENGEZEBE."

Our author, by experience, finds it true,
'Tis much more hard to please himself than you;
And out of no feign'd modesty, this day
Damns his laborious trifle of a play:
Not that it 's worse than what before he writ;
But he has now another taste of wit;
And, to confess a truth, though out of time,
Grows weary of his long-loved mistress, Rhyme.
Passion 's too fierce to be in fetters bound,
And nature flies him like enchanted ground:
What verse can do, he has perform'd in this,
Which he presumes the most correct of his;
But spite of all his pride, a secret shame
Invades his breast at Shakspeare's sacred name:
Awed when he hears his god-like Romans rage,
He, in a just despair, would quit the stage;
And to an age less polish'd, more unskill'd,
Does, with disdain, the foremost honours yield.
As with the greater dead he dares not strive,
He would not match his verse with those who live:
Let him retire, betwixt two ages cast,
The first of this, and hindmost of the last.
A losing gamester, let him sneak away;
He bears no ready money from the play.
The fate, which governs poets, thought it fit
He should not raise his fortunes by his wit.
The clergy thrive, and the litigious bar;
Dull heroes fatten with the spoils of war;
All southern vices, Heaven be praised, are here;
But wit 's a luxury you think too dear.

When you to cultivate the plant are loth,
'Tis a shrewd sign 'twas never of your growth;
And wit in northern climates will not blow,
Except, like orange-trees, 'tis housed from snow.
There needs no care to put a playhouse down,
'Tis the most desert place of all the town:
We and our neighbours, to speak proudly, are,
Like monarchs, ruin'd with expensive war;
While, like wise English, unconcern'd you sit,
And see us play the tragedy of wit.

TO "LIMBERHAM."

True wit has seen its best days long ago;
It ne'er look'd up, since we were dipp'd in show;
When sense in doggrel rhymes and clouds was lost,
And dulness flourish'd at the actor's cost.
Nor stopp'd it here; when tragedy was done,
Satire and humour the same fate have run,
And comedy is sunk to trick and pun.
Now our machining lumber will not sell,
And you no longer care for heaven or hell;
What stuff can please you next, the Lord can tell.
Let them, who the rebellion first began
To wit, restore the monarch, if they can;
Our author dares not be the first bold man.
He, like the prudent citizen, takes care
To keep for better marts his staple ware;
His toys are good enough for Stourbridge fair.
Tricks were the fashion; if it now be spent,
'Tis time enough at Easter to invent;
No man will make up a new suit for Lent.
If now and then he takes a small pretence,
To forage for a little wit and sense,
Pray pardon him, he meant you no offence.
Next summer, Nostradamus tells, they say,
That all the critics shall be shipp'd away,
And not enow be left to damn a play.
To every sail beside, good Heaven, be kind;
But drive away that swarm with such a wind,
That not one locust may be left behind!

TO "ŒDIPUS."

WHEN Athens all the Grecian state did guide,
And Greece gave laws to all the world beside;
Then Sophocles with Socrates did sit,
Supreme in wisdom one, and one in wit:
And wit from wisdom differ'd not in those,
But, as 'twas sung in verse, or said in prose.
Then, Œdipus, on crowded theatres,
Drew all admiring eyes and listening ears:
The pleased spectator shouted every line,
The noblest, manliest, and the best design!
And every critic of each learned age,
By this just model has reform'd the stage.
Now, should it fail, (as Heaven avert our fear)
Damn it in silence, lest the world should hear.
For were it known this poem did not please,
You might set up for perfect savages:
Your neighbours would not look on you as men,
But think the nation all turn'd Picts again.
Faith, as you manage matters, 'tis not fit
You should suspect yourselves of too much wit:
Drive not the jest too far, but spare this piece;
And, for this once, be not more wise than Greece.
See twice! do not pell-mell to damning fall,
Like true-born Britons, who ne'er think at all:
Pray be advised; and though at Mons you won,
On pointed cannon do not always run.
With some respect to ancient wit proceed;
You take the four first councils for your creed.
But, when you lay tradition wholly by,
And on the private spirit alone rely,
You turn fanatics in your poetry.
If, notwithstanding all that we can say,
You needs will have your pen'orths of the play,
And come resolved to damn, because you pay,
Record it, in memorial of the fact,
The first play buried since the woollen act.

TO "TROILUS AND CRESSIDA."

SPOKEN BY MR. BETTERTON, REPRESENTING THE GHOST OF SHAKSPEARE.

SEE, my loved Britons, see your Shakspeare rise,
An awful ghost confess'd to human eyes!
Unnamed, methinks, distinguish'd I had been
From other shades, by this eternal green,
About whose wreaths the vulgar poets strive,
And with a touch, their wither'd bays revive.
Untaught, unpractised, in a barbarous age,
I found not, but created first the stage.
And, if I drain'd no Greek or Latin store,
'Twas, that my own abundance gave me more.
On foreign trade I needed not rely,
Like fruitful Britain, rich without supply.
In this my rough-drawn play you shall behold
Some master-strokes, so manly and so bold,
That he who meant to alter, found 'em such,
He shook, and thought it sacrilege to touch.
Now, where are the successors to my name?
What bring they to fill out a poet's fame?
Weak, short-lived issues of a feeble age;
Scarce living to be christen'd on the stage!
For humour farce, for love they rhyme dispense,
That tolls the knell for their departed sense.
Dulness might thrive in any trade but this:
'Twould recommend to some fat benefice.
Dulness, that in a playhouse meets disgrace,
Might meet with reverence in its proper place.
The fulsome clench, that nauseates the town,
Would from a judge or alderman go down,
Such virtue is there in a robe and gown!
And that insipid stuff which here you hate,
Might somewhere else be call'd a grave debate;
Dulness is decent in the church and state.
But I forget that still 'tis understood,
Bad plays are best decried by showing good.
Sit silent then, that my pleased soul may see
A judging audience once and worthy me;
My faithful scene from true records shall tell,
How Trojan valour did the Greek excel;
Your great forefathers shall their fame regain,
And Homer's angry ghost repine in vain.

TO 'CÆSAR BORGIA,'

BY NATHANIEL LEE, 1680.

THE unhappy man, who once has trail'd a pen,
Lives not to please himself, but other men;
Is always drudging, wastes his life and blood,
Yet only eats and drinks what you think good.
What praise soe'er the poetry deserve,
Yet every fool can bid the poet starve.
That fumbling lecher to revenge is bent,
Because he thinks himself or whore is meant:
Name but a cuckold, all the city swarms;
From Leadenhall to Ludgate is in arms:
Were there no fear of Antichrist, or France,
In the blest time poor poets live by chance.
Either you come not here, or, as you grace
Some old acquaintance, drop into the place,
Careless and qualmish with a yawning face:
You sleep o'er wit, and by my troth you may;
Most of your talents lie another way.
You love to hear of some prodigious tale,
The bell that toll'd alone, or Irish whale.
News is your food, and you enough provide,
Both for yourselves, and all the world beside.
One theatre there is of vast resort,
Which whilome of Requests was call'd the Court;
But now the great Exchange of News 'tis hight,
And full of hum and buz from noon 'till night.
Up stairs and down you run, as for a race,
And each man wears three nations in his face.
So big you look, though claret you retrench,
That, arm'd with bottled ale, you huff the French.
But all your entertainment still is fed
By villains in your own dull island bred.
Would you return to us, we dare engage
To show you better rogues upon the stage.
You know no poison but plain ratsbane here;
Death 's more refined, and better bred elsewhere.
They have a civil way in Italy,
By smelling a perfume to make you die;
A trick would make you lay your snuff-box by.

Murder 's a trade, so known and practised there,
That 'tis infallible as is the chair.
But, mark their feast, you shall behold such pranks;
The Pope says grace, but 'tis the Devil gives thanks.

TO "SOPHONISBA," 1680.

THESPIS, the first professor of our art,
At country wakes, sung ballads from a cart.
To prove this true, if Latin be no trespass,
"Dicitur et plaustris vexisse Poëmata Thespis."
But Æschylus, says Horace in some page,
Was the first mountebank that trod the stage:
Yet Athens never knew your learned sport
Of tossing poets in a tennis-court.
But 'tis the talent of our English nation
Still to be plotting some new reformation:
And few years hence, if anarchy goes on,
Jack Presbyter shall here erect his throne,
Knock out a tub with preaching once a day,
And every prayer be longer than a play.
Then all your heathen wits shall go to pot,
For disbelieving of a Popish-plot:
Your poets shall be used like infidels,
And worst, the author of the Oxford bells:
Nor should we 'scape the sentence, to depart,
E'en in our first original—a cart.
No zealous brother there would want a stone,
To maul us cardinals, and pelt Pope Joan:
Religion, learning, wit, would be suppress'd,
Rags of the whore, and trappings of the beast:
Scot, Suarez, Tom of Aquin, must go down,
As chief supporters of the triple crown;
And Aristotle 's for destruction ripe;
Some say, he call'd the soul an organ-pipe,
Which, by some little help of derivation,
Shall then be proved a pipe of inspiration.

A PROLOGUE.

If yet there be a few that take delight
In that which reasonable men should write;
To them alone we dedicate this night.
The rest may satisfy their curious itch,
With city-gazettes, or some factious speech,
Or whate'er libel, for the public good,
Stirs up the shrove-tide crew to fire and blood.
Remove your benches, you apostate pit,
And take, above, twelve pennyworth of wit;
Go back to your dear dancing on the rope,
Or see what's worse, the devil and the pope.
The plays that take on our corrupted stage,
Methinks, resemble the distracted age;
Noise, madness, all unreasonable things,
That strike at sense, as rebels do at kings.
The style of forty-one our poets write,
And you are grown to judge like forty-eight.
Such censures our mistaking audience make,
That 'tis almost grown scandalous to take.
They talk of fevers that infect the brains;
But nonsense is the new disease that reigns.
Weak stomachs, with a long disease oppress'd,
Cannot the cordials of strong wit digest.
Therefore thin nourishment of farce ye choose,
Decoctions of a barley-water muse:
A meal of tragedy would make ye sick,
Unless it were a very tender chick.
Some scenes in sippets would be worth our time;
Those would go down; some love that's poach'd in rhyme;
If these should fail——
We must lie down, and, after all our cost,
Keep holiday, like watermen in frost;
While you turn players on the world's great stage,
And act yourselves the farce of your own age.

TO THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD, 1681.

The famed Italian muse, whose rhymes advance
Orlando and the Paladins of France,
Records, that, when our wit and sense is flown,
'Tis lodged within the circle of the moon,

In earthen jars, which one, who thither soar'd,
Set to his nose, snuff'd up, and was restored.
Whate'er the story be, the moral 's true;
The wit we lost in town, we find in you.
Our poets their fled parts may draw from hence,
And fill their windy heads with sober sense.
When London votes with Southwark's disagree,
Here they may find their long-lost loyalty.
Here busy senates, to the old cause inclined,
May snuff the votes their fellows left behind:
Your country neighbours, when their grain grows dear,
May come, and find their last provision here:
Whereas we cannot much lament our loss,
Who neither carried back, nor brought one cross.
We look'd what representatives would bring;
But they help'd us, just as they did the king.
Yet we despair not; for we now lay forth
The Sibyl's books to those who know their worth;
And though the first was sacrificed before,
These volumes doubly will the price restore.
Our poet bade us hope this grace to find,
To whom by long prescription you are kind.
He, whose undaunted Muse, with loyal rage,
Has never spared the vices of the age,
Here finding nothing that his spleen can raise,
Is forced to turn his satire into praise.

TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS,

UPON HIS FIRST APPEARANCE AT THE DUKE'S THEATRE, AFTER HIS RETURN FROM SCOTLAND, 1682.

In those cold regions which no summers cheer,
Where brooding darkness covers half the year,
To hollow caves the shivering natives go;
Bears range abroad, and hunt in tracks of snow:
But when the tedious twilight wears away,
And stars grow paler at the approach of day,
The longing crowds to frozen mountains run;
Happy who first can see the glimmering sun:

The surly, savage offspring disappear,
And curse the bright successor of the year.
Yet, though rough bears in covert seek defence,
White foxes stay, with seeming innocence:
That crafty kind with daylight can dispense.
Still we are throng'd so full with Reynard's race,
That loyal subjects scarce can find a place:
Thus modest truth is cast behind the crowd:
Truth speaks too low; Hypocrisy too loud.
Let them be first to flatter in success;
Duty can stay, but guilt has need to press.
Once, when true zeal the sons of God did call,
To make their solemn show at heaven's Whitehall,
The fawning devil appear'd among the rest,
And made as good a courtier as the best.
The friends of Job, who rail'd at him before,
Came cap in hand when he had three times more.
Yet late repentance may, perhaps, be true;
Kings can forgive, if rebels can but sue:
A tyrant's power in rigour is express'd;
The father yearns in the true prince's breast.
We grant, an o'ergrown Whig no grace can mend;
But most are babes, that know not they offend.
The crowd to restless motion still inclined,
Are clouds, that tack according to the wind,
Driven by their chiefs they storms of hailstones pour;
Then mourn, and soften to a silent shower.
Oh, welcome to this much-offending land,
The prince that brings forgiveness in his hand!
Thus angels on glad messages appear:
Their first salute commands us not to fear:
Thus Heaven, that could constrain us to obey,
(With reverence if we might presume to say)
Seems to relax the rights of sovereign sway:
Permits to man the choice of good and ill,
And makes us happy by our own free-will.

TO "THE EARL OF ESSEX."

[BY MR. J. BANKS, 1682.] SPOKEN TO THE KING AND THE QUEEN AT THEIR COMING TO THE HOUSE.

WHEN first the ark was landed on the shore,
And Heaven had vow'd to curse the ground no more;
When tops of hills the longing patriarch saw,
And the new scene of earth began to draw,
The dove was sent to view the waves' decrease,
And first brought back to man the pledge of peace.
'Tis needless to apply, when those appear,
Who bring the olive, and who plant it here.
We have before our eyes the royal dove,
Still innocent, as harbinger to love:
The ark is open'd to dismiss the train,
And people with a better race the plain.
Tell me, ye Powers, why should vain man pursue,
With endless toil, each object that is new,
And for the seeming substance leave the true?
Why should he quit for hopes his certain good,
And loathe the manna of his daily food?
Must England still the scene of changes be,
Toss'd and tempestuous, like our ambient sea?
Must still our weather and our wills agree?
Without our blood our liberties we have:
Who that is free would fight to be a slave?
Or, what can wars to after-times assure,
Of which our present age is not secure?
All that our monarch would for us ordain,
Is but to enjoy the blessings of his reign.
Our land 's an Eden, and the main 's our fence,
While we preserve our state of innocence:
That lost, then beasts their brutal force employ,
And first their lord, and then themselves destroy.
What civil broils have cost, we know too well;
Oh, let it be enough that once we fell!
And every heart conspire, and every tongue,
Still to have such a king, and this king long.

TO "THE LOYAL BROTHER; OR, THE PERSIAN PRINCE."

[BY MR. SOUTHERN, 1682.]

POETS, like lawful monarchs, ruled the stage,
Till critics, like damn'd Whigs, debauch'd our age.
Mark how they jump: critics would regulate
Our theatres, and Whigs reform our state:
Both pretend love, and both (plague rot them!) hate.
The critic humbly seems advice to bring;
The fawning Whig petitions to the king:
But one's advice into a satire slides;
T' other's petition a remonstrance hides.
These will no taxes give, and those no pence;
Critics would starve the poet, Whigs the prince.
The critic all our troops of friends discards;
Just so the Whig would fain pull down the guards.
Guards are illegal, that drive foes away,
As watchful shepherds, that fright beasts of prey.
Kings, who disband such needless aids as these,
Are safe—as long as e'er their subjects please:
And that would be till next queen Bess's night:
Which thus grave penny chroniclers indite.
Sir Edmondbury first, in woful wise,
Leads up the show, and milks their maudlin eyes.
There 's not a butcher's wife but dribs her part,
And pities the poor pageant from her heart;
Who, to provoke revenge, rides round the fire,
And, with a civil congé, does retire:
But guiltless blood to ground must never fall;
There 's Antichrist behind, to pay for all.
The punk of Babylon in pomp appears,
A lewd old gentleman of seventy years:
Whose age in vain our mercy would implore;
For few take pity on an old cast whore.
The devil, who brought him to the shame, takes part;
Sits cheek by jowl, in black, to cheer his heart;
Like thief and parson in a Tyburn-cart.
The word is given, and with a loud huzza
The mitred puppet from his chair they draw:
On the slain corpse contending nations fall:
Alas! what 's one poor Pope among them all!
He burns; now all true hearts your triumphs ring:
And next, for fashion, cry, God save the king.

A needful cry in 'midst of such alarms,
When forty thousand men are up in arms.
But after he 's once saved, to make amends,
In each succeeding health they damn his friends:
So God begins, but still the Devil ends.
What if some one, inspired with zeal, should call,
Come, let 's go cry, God save him, at Whitehall?
His best friends would not like this over-care,
Or think him e'er the safer for this prayer.
Five praying saints are by an act allow'd;
But not the whole church-militant in crowd.
Yet, should Heaven all the true petitions drain
Of Presbyterians who would kings maintain,
Of forty thousand, five would scarce remain.

TO THE KING AND QUEEN,

UPON THE UNION OF THE TWO COMPANIES IN 1682.

SINCE faction ebbs, and rogues grow out of fashion,
Their penny scribes take care to inform the nation,
How well men thrive in this or that plantation:

How Pennsylvania's air agrees with Quakers,
And Carolina's with Associators:
Both e'en too good for madmen and for traitors.

Truth is, our land with saints is so run o'er,
And every age produces such a store,
That now there 's need of two New-Englands more.

What 's this, you 'll say, to us and our vocation?
Only thus much, that we have left our station,
And made this theatre our new plantation.

The factious natives never could agree;
But aiming, as they call'd it, to be free,
Those play-house Whigs set up for property.

Some say, they no obedience paid of late;
But would new fears and jealousies create;
Till topsy-turvy they had turn'd the state.

Plain sense, without the talent of foretelling,
Might guess 'twould end in downright knocks and quelling,
For seldom comes there better of rebelling.

When men will, needlessly, their freedom barter
For lawless power, sometimes they catch a Tartar;
There 's a damn'd word that rhymes to this, call'd Charter.

But, since the victory with us remains,
You shall be call'd to twelve in all our gains;
If you 'll not think us saucy for our pains.

Old men shall have good old plays to delight 'em:
And you, fair ladies and gallants, that slight 'em,
We 'll treat with good new plays; if our new wits can write 'em.

We 'll take no blundering verse, no fustian tumour,
No dribbling love, from this or that perfumer;
No dull fat fool shamm'd on the stage for humour.

For, faith, some of 'em such vile stuff have made,
As none but fools or fairies ever play'd;
But 'twas, as shopmen say, to force a trade.

We 've given you tragedies, all sense defying,
And singing men, in woful metre dying;
This 'tis when heavy lubbers will be flying.

All these disasters we well hope to weather;
We bring you none of our old lumber hither:
Whig poets and Whig sheriffs may hang together.

TO THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

SPOKEN AT THE ACTING OF "THE SILENT WOMAN."

WHAT Greece, when learning flourish'd, only knew,
Athenian judges, you this day renew.
Here too are annual rites to Pallas done,
And here poetic prizes lost or won.
Methinks I see you, crown'd with olives, sit,
And strike a sacred horror from the pit.
A day of doom is this of your decree,
Where even the best are but by mercy free:
A day, which none but Jonson durst have wish'd to see
Here they, who long have known the useful stage,
Come to be taught themselves to teach the age.

As your commissioners our poets go,
To cultivate the virtue which you sow;
In your Lycæum first themselves refined,
And delegated thence to human-kind.
But as ambassadors, when long from home,
For new instructions to their princes come;
So poets, who your precepts have forgot,
Return, and beg they may be better taught:
Follies and faults elsewhere by them are shown,
But by your manners they correct their own.
The illiterate writer, empiric-like, applies
To minds diseased, unsafe, chance, remedies:
The learn'd in schools, where knowledge first began,
Studies with care the anatomy of man;
Sees virtue, vice, and passions in their cause,
And fame from science, not from fortune, draws.
So Poetry, which is in Oxford made
An art, in London only is a trade.
There haughty dunces, whose unlearned pen
Could ne'er spell grammar, would be reading men.
Such build their poems the Lucretian way;
So many huddled atoms make a play;
And if they hit in order by some chance,
They call that nature, which is ignorance.
To such a fame let mere town-wits aspire,
And their gay nonsense their own cits admire.
Our poet, could he find forgiveness here,
Would wish it rather than a plaudit there.
He owns no crown from those Prætorian bands,
But knows that right is in the senate's hands,
Not impudent enough to hope your praise,
Low at the Muses' feet his wreath he lays,
And, where he took it up, resigns his bays.
Kings make their poets whom themselves think fit,
But 'tis your suffrage makes authentic wit.

TO THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

Discord and plots, which have undone our age,
With the same ruin have o'erwhelm'd the stage.
Our house has suffer'd in the common woe,
We have been troubled with Scotch rebels too.

Our brethren are from Thames to Tweed departed,
And of our sisters, all the kinder-hearted,
To Edinburgh gone, or coach'd, or carted.
With bonny bluecap there they act all night
For Scotch half-crown, in England three-pence hight.
One nymph, to whom fat Sir John Falstaff 's lean,
There with her single person fills the scene.
Another, with long use and age decay'd,
Dived here old woman, and rose there a maid.
Our trusty doorkeepers of former time
There strut and swagger in heroic rhyme.
Tack but a copper-lace to drugget suit,
And there 's a hero made without dispute:
And that, which was a capon's tail before,
Becomes a plume for Indian emperor.
But all his subjects, to express the care
Of imitation, go, like Indians, bare:
Laced linen there would be a dangerous thing;
It might perhaps a new rebellion bring;
The Scot, who wore it, would be chosen king.
But why should I these renegades describe,
When you yourselves have seen a lewder tribe?
Teague has been here, and, to this learned pit,
With Irish action slander'd English wit:
You have beheld such barbarous Macs appeár,
As merited a second massacre:
Such as, like Cain, were branded with disgrace,
And had their country stamp'd upon their face.
When strollers durst presume to pick your purse,
We humbly thought our broken troop not worse.
How ill soe'er our action may deserve,
Oxford 's a place where wit can never starve.

TO THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

THOUGH actors cannot much of learning boast,
Of all who want it, we admire it most:
We love the praises of a learned pit,
As we remotely are allied to wit.
We speak our poet's wit, and trade in ore,
Like those, who touch upon the golden shore:
Betwixt our judges can distinction make,
Discern how much, and why, our poems take:

Mark if the fools, or men of sense, rejoice;
Whether the applause be only sound or voice.
When our fop gallants, or our city folly,
Clap over-loud, it makes us melancholy:
We doubt that scene which does their wonder raise,
And, for their ignorance, contemn their praise.
Judge then, if we who act, and they who write,
Should not be proud of giving you delight.
London likes grossly; but this nicer pit
Examines, fathoms all the depths of wit;
The ready finger lays on every blot;
Knows what should justly please, and what should not.
Nature herself lies open to your view;
You judge by her, what draught of her is true,
Where outlines false, and colours seem too faint,
Where bunglers daub, and where true poets paint.
But, by the sacred genius of this place,
By every Muse, by each domestic grace,
Be kind to wit, which but endeavours well,
And, where you judge, presumes not to excel.
Our poets hither for adoption come,
As nations sued to be made free of Rome:
Not in the suffragating tribes to stand,
But in your utmost, last, provincial band.
If his ambition may those hopes pursue,
Who with religion loves your arts and you,
Oxford to him a dearer name shall be,
Than his own mother-university.
Thebes did his green, unknowing, youth engage;
He chooses Athens in his riper age.

TO "ALBION AND ALBANIUS."

Full twenty years and more, our labouring stage
Has lost, on this incorrigible age:
Our poets, the John Ketches of the nation,
Have seem'd to lash ye, even to excoriation;
But still no sign remains; which plainly notes,
You bore like heroes, or you bribed like Oates.
What can we do, when mimicking a fop,
Like beating nut-trees, makes a larger crop?

'Faith, we 'll e'en spare our pains! and, to content you,
Will fairly leave you what your Maker meant you.
Satire was once your physic, wit your food;
One nourish'd not, and t' other drew no blood:
We now prescribe, like doctors in despair,
The diet your weak appetites can bear.
Since hearty beef and mutton will not do,
Here 's julep-dance, ptisan of song and show:
Give you strong sense, the liquor is too heady;
You 're come to force,—that 's asses' milk,—already.
Some hopeful youths there are, of callow wit,
Who one day may be men, if Heaven think fit;
Sound may serve such, ere they to sense are grown,
Like leading-strings, till they can walk alone.
But yet, to keep our friends in countenance, know,
The wise Italians first invented show;
Thence into France the noble pageant pass'd:
'Tis England's credit to be cozen'd last.
Freedom and zeal have choused you o'er and o'er;
Pray give us leave to bubble you once more;
You never were so cheaply fool'd before:
We bring you change, to humour your disease;
Change for the worse has ever used to please:
Then, 'tis the mode of France; without whose rules,
None must presume to set up here for fools.
In France, the oldest man is always young,
Sees operas daily, learns the tunes so long,
Till foot, hand, head, keep time with every song:
Each sings his part, echoing from pit and box
With his hoarse voice, half harmony, half pox.
Le plus grand roi du monde is always ringing,
They show themselves good subjects by their singing:
On that condition, set up every throat;
You Whigs may sing, for you have changed your note.
Cits and citesses, raise a joyful strain,
'Tis a good omen to begin a reign;
Voices may help your charter to restoring,
And get by singing, what you lost by roaring.

TO "ARVIRAGUS AND PHILICIA" REVIVED.

[BY LODOWICK CARLELL, ESQ.] SPOKEN BY MR. HART.

With sickly actors and an old house too,
We're match'd with glorious theatres and new,
And with our alehouse scenes, and clothes bare worn,
Can neither raise old plays, nor new adorn.
If all these ills could not undo us quite,
A brisk French troop is grown your dear delight;
Who with broad bloody bills call you each day,
To laugh and break your buttons at their play;
Or see some serious piece, which we presume
Is fall'n from some incomparable plume;
And therefore, Messieurs, if you 'll do us grace,
Send lackeys early to preserve your place.
We dare not on your privilege intrench,
Or ask you why you like them? they are French.
Therefore some go with courtesy exceeding,
Neither to hear nor see, but show their breeding:
Each lady striving to out-laugh the rest;
To make it seem they understood the jest.
Their countrymen come in, and nothing pay,
To teach us English where to clap the play:
Civil, egad! our hospitable land
Bears all the charge, for them to understand:
Meantime we languish, and neglected lie,
Like wives, while you keep better company;
And wish for your own sakes, without a satire,
You 'd loss good breeding, or had more good-nature.

TO "DON SEBASTIAN."

SPOKEN BY A WOMAN.

The judge removed, though he 's no more my lord,
May plead at bar, or at the council-board:
So may cast poets write; there 's no pretension
To argue loss of wit from loss of pension.
Your looks are cheerful; and in all this place
I see not one that wears a damning face.

The British nation is too brave, to show
Ignoble vengeance on a vanquish'd foe.
At last be civil to the wretch imploring;
And lay your paws upon him, without roaring.
Suppose our poet was your foe before,
Yet now, the business of the field is o'er;
'Tis time to let your civil wars alone,
When troops are into winter-quarters gone.
Jove was alike to Latian and to Phrygian;
And you well know a play 's of no religion.
Take good advice and please yourselves this day;
No matter from what hands you have the play.
Among good fellows every health will pass,
That serves to carry round another glass:
When with full bowls of Burgundy you dine,
Though at the mighty monarch you repine,
You grant him still Most Christian in his wine.
Thus far the poet; but his brains grow addle,
And all the rest is purely from this noddle.
You have seen young ladies at the senate-door
Prefer petitions, and your grace implore;
However grave the legislators were,
Their cause went ne'er the worse for being fair.
Reasons as weak as theirs, perhaps, I bring;
But I could bribe you with as good a thing.
I heard him make advances of good-nature;
That he, for once, would sheathe his cutting satire.
Sign but his peace, he vows he 'll ne'er again
The sacred name of fops and beaus profane.
Strike up the bargain quickly; for I swear,
As times go now, he offers very fair.
Be not too hard on him with statutes neither;
Be kind; and do not set your teeth together,
To stretch the laws, as cobblers do their leather.
Horses by Papists are not to be ridden,
But sure the Muses' horse was ne'er forbidden;
For in no rate-book it was ever found
That Pegasus was valued at five pound;
Fine him to daily drudging and inditing:
And let him pay his taxes out in writing.

TO "THE PROPHETESS."

[BY BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.] REVIVED BY MR. DRYDEN.

SPOKEN BY MR. BETTERTON.

What Nostradame, with all his art, can guess
The fate of our approaching Prophetess?
A play, which, like a perspective set right,
Presents our vast expenses close to sight;
But turn the tube, and there we sadly view
Our distant gains; and those uncertain too:
A sweeping tax, which on ourselves we raise,
And all, like you, in hopes of better days.
When will our losses warn us to be wise?
Our wealth decreases, and our charges rise.
Money, the sweet allurer of our hopes,
Ebbs out in oceans, and comes in by drops.
We raise new objects to provoke delight;
But you grow sated, ere the second sight.
False men, e'en so you serve your mistresses:
They rise three stories in their towering dress;
And, after all, you love not long enough
To pay the rigging, ere you leave them off.
Never content with what you had before,
But true to change, and Englishmen all o'er.
Now honour calls you hence; and all your care
Is to provide the horrid pomp of war.
In plume and scarf, jack-boots, and Bilbo blade,
Your silver goes, that should support our trade.
Go, unkind heroes, leave our stage to mourn;
'Till rich from vanquish'd rebels you return;
And the fat spoils of Teague in triumph draw,
His firkin-butter, and his usquebaugh.
Go, conquerors of your male and female foes;
Men without hearts, and women without hose.
Each bring his love a Bogland captive home;
Such proper pages will long trains become;
With copper collars, and with brawny backs,
Quite to put down the fashion of our blacks.
Then shall the pious Muses pay their vows,
And furnish all their laurels for your brows;
Their tuneful voice shall raise for your delights;
We want not poets fit to sing your flights.

But you, bright beauties, for whose only sake
Those doughty knights such dangers undertake,
When they with happy gales are gone away,
With your propitious presence grace our play;
And with a sigh their empty seats survey:
Then think, on that bare bench my servant sat;
I see him ogle still, and hear him chat;
Selling facetious bargains, and propounding
That witty recreation, call'd dumb-founding.
Their loss with patience we will try to bear;
And would do more, to see you often here:
That our dead stage, revived by your fair eyes,
Under a female regency may rise.

TO THE "MISTAKES."

Enter MR. BRIGHT.

GENTLEMEN, we must beg your pardon; here's no Prologue to be had to-day; our new play is like to come on, without a frontispiece; as bald as one of you young beaux, without your periwig. I left our young poet, snivelling and sobbing behind the scenes, and cursing somebody that has deceived him.

Enter MR. BOWEN.

Hold your prating to the audience: here's honest Mr. Williams, just come in, half mellow, from the Rose Tavern. He swears he is inspired with claret, and will come on, and that extempore too, either with a prologue of his own or something like one. Oh, here he comes to his trial, at all adventures; for my part I wish him a good deliverance.

[*Exeunt* MR. BRIGHT *and* MR. BOWEN.]

Enter MR. WILLIAMS.

Save ye, sirs, save ye! I am in a hopeful way.
I should speak something in rhyme, now, for the play:
But the deuce take me, if I know what to say.
I'll stick to my friend the author, that I can tell ye,
To the last drop of claret, in my belly.
So far I'm sure 'tis rhyme—that needs no granting:
And, if my verses' feet stumble—you see my own are wanting.

Our young poet has brought a piece of work,
In which, though much of art there does not lurk,
It may hold out three days—and that 's as long as Cork.
But, for this play—(which till I have done, we show not)
What may be its fortune—by the Lord—I know not.
This I dare swear, no malice here is writ:
'Tis innocent of all things; even of wit.
He 's no high-flier; he makes no sky-rockets,
His squibs are only levell'd at your pockets,
And if his crackers light among your pelf,
You are blown up; if not, then he 's blown up himself.
By this time, I 'm something recover'd of my fluster'd madness:
And now a word or two in sober sadness.
Ours is a common play; and you pay down
A common harlot's price; just half-a-crown.
You'll say, I play the pimp, on my friend's score;
But since 'tis for a friend, your gibes give o'er:
For many a mother has done that before.
How's this? you cry; an actor write? we know it;
But Shakspeare was an actor, and a poet.
Has not great Jonson's learning often fail'd?
But Shakspeare's greater genius still prevail'd.
Have not some writing actors, in this age,
Deserved and found success upon the stage?
To tell the truth, when our old wits are tired,
Not one of us but means to be inspired.
Let your kind presence grace our homely cheer;
Peace and the butt is all our business here:
So much for that; and the devil take small beer.

TO "KING ARTHUR."

SPOKEN BY MR. BETTERTON.

Sure there 's a dearth of wit in this dull town,
When silly plays so savourily go down;
As, when clipp'd money passes, tis a sign
A nation is not over-stock'd with coin.
Happy is he, who, in his own defence,
Can write just level to your humble sense;
Who higher than your pitch can never go;
And, doubtless, he must creep, who writes below

So have I seen, in hall of knight, or lord,
A weak arm throw on a long shovel-board;
He barely lays his piece, bar rubs and knocks,
Secured by weakness not to reach the box.
A feeble poet will his business do,
Who, straining all he can, comes up to you:
For, if you like yourselves, you like him too.
An ape his own dear image will embrace;
An ugly beau adores a hatchet face:
So, some of you, on pure instinct of nature,
Are led, by kind, to admire your fellow creature.
In fear of which, our house has sent this day,
To ensure our new-built vessel, call'd a play;
No sooner named, than one cries out,—These stagers
Come in good time, to make more work for wagers.
The town divides, if it will take or no;
The courtiers bet, the cits, the merchants, too;
A sign they have but little else to do.
Bets, at the first, were fool-traps; where the wise,
Like spiders, lay in ambush for the flies:
But now they 're grown a common trade for all,
And actions by the new-book rise and fall;
Wits, cheats, and fops, are free of Wager-hall.
One policy as far as Lyons carries;
Another, nearer home, sets up for Paris.
Our bets, at last, would even to Rome extend,
But that the pope has proved our trusty friend.
Indeed, it were a bargain worth our money,
Could we ensure another Ottoboni.
Among the rest there are a sharping set,
That pray for us, and yet against us bet.
Sure Heaven itself is at a loss to know
If these would have their prayers be heard, or no:
For, in great stakes, we piously suppose,
Men pray but very faintly they may lose.
Leave off these wagers; for, in conscience speaking,
The city needs not your new tricks for breaking:
And if you gallants lose, to all appearing,
You 'll want an equipage for volunteering;
While thus, no spark of honour left within ye,
When you should draw the sword, you draw the guinea.

TO "ALBUMAZAR."

To say, this comedy pleased long ago,
Is not enough to make it pass you now.
Yet, gentlemen, your ancestors had wit;
When few men censured, and when fewer writ.
And Jonson, of those few the best, chose this,
As the best model of his master-piece.
Subtle was got by our Albumazar,
That Alchymist by this Astrologer;
Here he was fashion'd, and we may suppose
He liked the fashion well, who wore the clothes.
But Ben made nobly his what he did mould;
What was another's lead, becomes his gold:
Like an unrighteous conqueror he reigns,
Yet rules that well, which he unjustly gains.
But this our age such authors does afford,
As make whole plays, and yet scarce write one word:
Who, in this anarchy of wit, rob all,
And what 's their plunder, their possession call:
Who, like bold padders, scorn by night to prey,
But rob by sunshine, in the face of day:
Nay, scarce the common ceremony use
Of, Stand, sir, and deliver up your Muse;
But knock the Poet down, and, with a grace,
Mount Pegasus before the author's face.
Faith, if you have such country Toms abroad,
'Tis time for all true men to leave that road.
Yet it were modest, could it but be said,
They strip the living, but these rob the dead;
Dare with the mummies of the Muses play,
And make love to them the Ægyptian way;
Or, as a rhyming author would have said,
Join the dead living to the living dead.
Such men in Poetry may claim some part:
They have the licence, though they want the art;
And might, where theft was praised, for Laureats stand,
Poets, not of the head, but of the hand.
They make the benefits of others studying,
Much like the meals of politic Jack-Pudding,
Whose dish to challenge no man has the courage;
'Tis all his own, when once he has spit i' the porridge.

But, gentlemen, you 're all concern'd in this;
You are in fault for what they do amiss:
For they their thefts still undiscover'd think,
And durst not steal, unless you please to wink.
Perhaps, you may award by your decree,
They should refund; but that can never be.
For should you letters of reprisal seal,
These men write that which no man else would steal.

TO "THE PILGRIM,"

REVIVED FOR OUR AUTHOR'S BENEFIT, ANNO 1700.

How wretched is the fate of those who write!
Brought muzzled to the stage, for fear they bite.
Where, like Tom Dove, they stand the common foe;
Lugg'd by the critic, baited by the beau.
Yet worse, their brother Poets damn the Play,
And roar the loudest, though they never pay.
The fops are proud of scandal, for they cry,
At every lewd, low character—That 's I.
He, who writes letters to himself, would swear,
The world forgot him, if he was not there.
What should a Poet do? 'Tis hard for one
To pleasure all the fools that would be shown:
And yet not two in ten will pass the town.
Most coxcombs are not of the laughing kind;
More goes to make a fop, than fops can find.
  Quack Maurus, though he never took degrees
In either of our universities;
Yet to be shown by some kind wit he looks,
Because he play'd the fool, and writ three books.
But, if he would be worth a Poet's pen,
He must be more a fool, and write again:
For all the former fustian stuff he wrote,
Was dead-born doggrel, or is quite forgot
His man of Uz, stript of his Hebrew robe
Is just the proverb, and as poor as Job.
One would have thought he could no longer jog;
But Arthur was a level, Job 's a bog.
There, though he crept, yet still he kept in sight;
But here he founders in, and sinks down right.

Had he prepared us, and been dull by rule,
Tobit had first been turn'd to ridicule:
But our bold Briton, without fear or awe,
O'erleaps at once the whole Apocrypha;
Invades the Psalms with rhymes, and leaves no room
For any Vandal Hopkins yet to come.
But when, if, after all, this godly gear
Is not so senseless as it would appear;
Our mountebank has laid a deeper train,
His cant, like Merry-Andrew's noble vein,
Cat-calls the sects to draw 'em in again.
At leisure hours, in epic song he deals,
Writes to the rumbling of his coach's wheels,
Prescribes in haste, and seldom kills by rule,
But rides triumphant between stool and stool.
Well, let him go; 'tis yet too early day,
To get himself a place in farce or play.
We know not by what name we should arraign him,
For no one category can contain him;
A pedant, canting preacher, and a quack,
Are load enough to break one ass's back:
At last grown wanton, he presumed to write,
Traduced two kings, their kindness to requite;
One made the doctor, and one dubb'd the knight.

Epilogues.

TO "THE INDIAN QUEEN."

SPOKEN BY MONTEZUMA.

You see what shifts we are enforced to try,
To help out wit with some variety;
Shows may be found that never yet were seen,
'Tis hard to find such wit as ne'er has been:
You have seen all that this old world can do,
We, therefore, try the fortune of the new,
And hope it is below your aim to hit
At untaught nature with your practised wit:

Our naked Indians, then, when wits appear,
Would as soon choose to have the Spaniards here.
'Tis true, you have marks enough,—the plot, the show,
The poet's scenes, nay, more, the painter's too;
If all this fail, considering the cost,
'Tis a true voyage to the Indies lost:
But if you smile on all, then these designs,
Like the imperfect treasure of our minds,
Will pass for current wheresoe'er they go,
When to your bounteous hands their stamps they owe.

TO "THE INDIAN EMPEROR."

BY A MERCURY.

To all and singular in this full meeting,
Ladies and gallants, Phœbus sends ye greeting.
To all his sons, by whate'er title known,
Whether of court, or coffee-house, or town;
From his most mighty sons, whose confidence
Is placed in lofty sound, and humble sense,
Even to his little infants of the time,
Who write new songs, and trust in tune and rhyme:
Be't known, that Phœbus (being daily grieved
To see good plays condemn'd, and bad received)
Ordains, your judgment upon every cause,
Henceforth, be limited by wholesome laws.
He first thinks fit no sonnetteer advance
His censure, farther than the song or dance.
Your wit burlesque may one step higher climb,
And in his sphere may judge all doggrel rhyme;
All proves, and moves, and loves, and honours too;
All that appears high sense, and scarce is low.
As for the coffee-wits, he says not much;
Their proper business is to damn the Dutch:
For the great dons of wit————
Phœbus gives them full privilege alone,
To damn all others, and cry up their own.
Last, for the ladies, 'tis Apollo's will,
They should have power to save, but not to kill;
For love and he long since have thought it fit,
Wit live by beauty, beauty reign by wit.

TO "THE WILD GALLANT,"

WHEN REVIVED.

Of all dramatic writing, comic wit,
As 'tis the best, so 'tis most hard to hit.
For it lies all in level to the eye,
Where all may judge, and each defect may spy.
Humour is that, which every day we meet,
And therefore known as every public street;
In which, if e'er the poet go astray,
You all can point, 'twas there he lost his way.
But, what's so common, to make pleasant too,
Is more than any wit can always do.
For 'tis like Turks, with hen and rice to treat;
To make regalios out of common meat.
But, in your diet, you grow savages:
Nothing but human flesh your taste can please;
And, as their feasts with slaughter'd slaves began,
So you, at each new play, must have a man.
Hither you come, as to see prizes fought;
If no blood's drawn, you cry, the prize is nought.
But fools grow wary now; and, when they see
A poet eyeing round the company,
Straight each man for himself begins to doubt;
They shrink like seamen when a press comes out.
Few of them will be found for public use,
Except you charge an oaf upon each house,
Like the train bands, and every man engage
For a sufficient fool, to serve the stage.
And when, with much ado, you get him there,
Where he in all his glory should appear,
Your poets make him such rare things to say,
That he's more wit than any man i' the play:
But of so ill a mingle with the rest,
As when a parrot's taught to break a jest.
Thus, aiming to be fine, they make a show,
As tawdry squires in country churches do.
Things well consider'd, 'tis so hard to make
A comedy, which should the knowing take,
That our dull poet, in despair to please,
Does humbly beg, by me, his writ of ease.
'Tis a land-tax, which he's too poor to pay;
You therefore must some other impost lay.

Would you but change, for serious plot and verse,
This motley garniture of fool and farce,
Nor scorn a mode, because 'tis taught at home.
Which does, like vests, our gravity become,
Our poet yields you should this play refuse:
As tradesmen, by the change of fashions, lose,
With some content, their fripperies of France,
In hope it may their staple trade advance.

TO THE SECOND PART OF "THE CONQUEST OF GRANADA."

They, who have best succeeded on the stage,
Have still conform'd their genius to their age.
Thus Jonson did mechanic humour show,
When men were dull, and conversation low.
Then comedy was faultless, but 'twas coarse:
Cobb's tankard was a jest, and Otter's horse.
And, as their comedy, their love was mean;
Except, by chance, in some one labour'd scene,
Which must atone for an ill-written play.
They rose, but at their height could seldom stay.
Fame then was cheap, and the first comer sped;
And they have kept it since, by being dead.
But, were they now to write, when critics weigh
Each line, and every word, throughout a play,
None of them, no, not Jonson in his height,
Could pass, without allowing grains for weight.
Think it not envy, that these truths are told;
Our poet 's not malicious, though he 's bold.
'Tis not to brand them, that their faults are shown,
But, by their errors, to excuse his own.
If love and honour now are higher raised,
'Tis not the poet, but the age is praised.
Wit 's now arrived to a more high degree;
Our native language more refined and free.
Our ladies and our men now speak more wit
In conversation, than those poets writ.
Then, one of these is, consequently, true;
That what this poet writes comes short of you,

And imitates you ill (which most he fears),
Or else his writing is not worse than theirs.
Yet, though you judge (as sure the critics will)
That some before him writ with greater skill,
In this one praise he has their fame surpass'd,
To please an age more gallant than the last.

TO "AMBOYNA."

A POET once the Spartans led to fight,
And made them conquer in the muse's right;
So would our poet lead you on this day,
Showing your tortured fathers in this play.
To one well-born the affront is worse, and more,
When he 's abused, and baffled by a boor:
With an ill grace the Dutch their mischiefs do,
They 've both ill-nature and ill-manners too.
Well may they boast themselves an ancient nation,
For they were bred ere manners were in fashion;
And their new commonwealth has set them free,
Only from honour and civility.
Venetians do not more uncouthly ride,
Than did their lubber-state mankind bestride;
Their sway became them with as ill a mien,
As their own paunches swell above their chin:
Yet is their empire no true growth, but humour,
And only two kings' touch can cure the tumour.
As Cato did his Afric fruits display,
So we before your eyes their Indies lay:
All loyal English will, like him, conclude,
Let Cæsar live, and Carthage be subdued!

INTENDED TO HAVE BEEN SPOKEN BY THE LADY HEN. MAR. WENTWORTH,

WHEN "CALISTO" WAS ACTED AT COURT.

As Jupiter I made my court in vain;
I 'll now assume my native shape again.
I 'm weary to be so unkindly used,
And would not be a god, to be refused.

State grows uneasy when it hinders love;
A glorious burden, which the wise remove.
Now, as a nymph, I need not sue, nor try
The force of any lightning but the eye.
Beauty and youth more than a god command;
No Jove could e'er the force of these withstand.
'Tis here that sovereign power admits dispute;
Beauty sometimes is justly absolute.
Our sullen Catos, whatsoe'er they say,
Even while they frown and dictate laws, obey.
You, mighty sir, our bonds more easy make,
And gracefully, what all must suffer, take;
Above those forms the grave affect to wear;
For 'tis not to be wise to be severe.
True wisdom may some gallantry admit,
And soften business with the charms of wit.
These peaceful triumphs with your cares you bought,
And from the midst of fighting nations brought.
You only hear it thunder from afar,
And sit in peace the arbiter of war:
Peace, the loathed manna, which hot brains despise,
You knew its worth, and made it early prize;
And in its happy leisure sit and see
The promises of more felicity;
Two glorious nymphs of your own godlike line,
Whose morning rays like noontide strike and shine:
Whom you to suppliant monarchs shall dispose,
To bind your friends, and to disarm your foes.

TO "THE MAN OF MODE; OR, SIR FOPLING FLUTTER."

[BY SIR GEORGE ETHEREGE, 1676.]

Most modern wits such monstrous fools have shown,
They seem not of Heaven's making, but their own.
Those nauseous harlequins in farce may pass;
But there goes more to a substantial ass:
Something of man must be exposed to view,
That, gallants, they may more resemble you.
Sir Fopling is a fool so nicely writ,
The ladies would mistake him for a wit;

And, when he sings, talks loud, and cocks, would cry,
I vow, methinks, he 's pretty company:
So brisk, so gay, so travell'd, so refined,
As he took pains to graff upon his kind.
True fops help nature's work, and go to school,
To file and finish God Almighty's fool.
Yet none Sir Fopling him, or him can call;
He 's knight o' the shire, and represents ye all.
From each he meets he culls whate'er he can;
Legion 's his name, a people in a man.
His bulky folly gathers as it goes,
And, rolling o'er you, like a snow-ball grows.
His various modes from various fathers follow;
One taught the toss, and one the new French wallow:
His sword-knot this, his cravat that design'd;
And this, the yard-long snake he twirls behind.
From one the sacred periwig he gain'd,
Which wind ne'er blew, nor touch of hat profaned.
Another's diving bow he did adore,
Which with a shog casts all the hair before,
Till he with full decorum brings it back,
And rises with a water-spaniel shake.
As for his songs, the ladies' dear delight,
These sure he took from most of you who write.
Yet every man is safe from what he fear'd;
For no one fool is hunted from the herd.

TO "ALL FOR LOVE."

Poets, like disputants, when reasons fail,
Have one sure refuge left—and that 's to rail.
Fop, coxcomb, fool, are thunder'd through the pit;
And this is all their equipage of wit.
We wonder how the devil this difference grows,
Betwixt our fools in verse, and yours in prose;
For, 'faith, the quarrel rightly understood,
'Tis civil war with their own flesh and blood.
The thread-bare author hates the gaudy coat;
And swears at the gilt coach, but swears a-foot:
For 'tis observed of every scribbling man,
He grows a fop as fast as e'er he can;

Prunes up, and asks his oracle, the glass,
If pink and purple best become his face.
For our poor wretch, he neither rails nor prays;
Nor likes your wit just as you like his plays;
He has not yet so much of Mr. Bayes.
He does his best; and if he cannot please,
Would quietly sue out his *writ of ease.*
Yet, if he might his own grand jury call,
By the fair sex he begs to stand or fall.
Let Cæsar's power the men's ambition move,
But grace you him who lost the world for love!
Yet if some antiquated lady say,
The last age is not copied in his play;
Heaven help the man who for that face must drudge,
Which only has the wrinkles of a judge.
Let not the young and beauteous join with those;
For should you raise such numerous hosts of foes,
Young wits and sparks he to his aid must call;
'Tis more than one man's work to please you all.

TO "MITHRIDATES, KING OF PONTUS."

[BY MR. N. LEE, 1678.]

You 've seen a pair of faithful lovers die:
And much you care; for most of you will cry,
'Twas a just judgment on their constancy.
For, Heaven be thank'd, we live in such an age,
When no man dies for love, but on the stage:
And e'en those martyrs are but rare in plays;
A cursèd sign how much true faith decays.
Love is no more a violent desire;
'Tis a mere metaphor, a painted fire.
In all our sex, the name examined well,
'Tis pride to gain, and vanity to tell.
In woman, 'tis of subtle interest made:
Curse on the punk that made it first a trade!
She first did wit's prerogative remove,
And made a fool presume to prate of love.
Let honour and preferment go for gold;
But glorious beauty is not to be sold:

Or, if it be, 'tis at a rate so high,
That nothing but adoring it should buy.
Yet the rich cullies may their boasting spare;
They purchase but sophisticated ware.
'Tis prodigality that buys deceit,
Where both the giver and the taker cheat.
Men but refine on the old half-crown way;
And women fight, like Swissers, for their pay.

TO "ŒDIPUS."

WHAT Sophocles could undertake alone,
Our poets found a work for more than one;
And therefore two lay tugging at the piece,
With all their force, to draw the ponderous mass from Greece;
A weight that bent even Seneca's strong muse,
And which Corneille's shoulders did refuse.
So hard it is the Athenian harp to string!
So much two consuls yield to one just king.
Terror and pity this whole poem sway;
The mightiest machines that can mount a play.
How heavy will those vulgar souls be found,
Whom two such engines cannot move from ground!
When Greece and Rome have smiled upon this birth,
You can but damn for one poor spot of earth,
And when your children find your judgment such,
They'll scorn their sires, and wish themselves born Dutch;
Each haughty poet will infer with ease,
How much his wit must under-write to please.
As some strong churl would, brandishing, advance
The monumental sword that conquer'd France;
So you, by judging this, your judgment teach,
Thus far you like, that is, thus far you reach.
Since then the vote of full two thousand years
Has crown'd this plot, and all the dead are theirs,
Think it a debt you pay, not alms you give,
And, in your own defence, let this Play live.
Think them not vain, when Sophocles is shown
To praise his worth they humbly doubt their own.
Yet as weak states each other's power assure,
Weak poets by conjunction are secure.

Their treat is what your palates relish most,
Charm! song! and show! a murder and a ghost!
We know not what you can desire or hope,
To please you more, but burning of a Pope.

FOR THE KING'S HOUSE.

We act by fits and starts, like drowning men,
But just peep up, and then pop down again.
Let those who call us wicked change their sense;
For never men lived more on Providence.
Not lottery cavaliers are half so poor,
Nor broken cits, nor a vacation whore.
Not courts, nor courtiers living on the rents
Of the three last ungiving parliaments:
So wretched, that, if Pharaoh could divine,
He might have spared his dream of seven lean kine,
And changed his vision for the Muses nine.
The comet, that, they say, portends a dearth,
Was but a vapour drawn from play-house earth:
Pent there since our last fire, and, Lilly says,
Foreshows our change of state, and thin third-days.
'Tis not our want of wit that keeps us poor;
For then the printer's press would suffer more.
Their pamphleteers each day their venom spit;
They thrive by treason, and we starve by wit.
Confess the truth, which of you has not laid
Four farthings out to buy the Hatfield maid?
Or, which is duller yet, and more would spite us,
Democritus his wars with Heraclitus?
Such are the authors, who have run us down,
And exercised you critics of the town.
Yet these are pearls to your lampooning rhymes,
Y' abuse yourselves more dully than the times.
Scandal, the glory of the English nation,
Is worn to rags, and scribbled out of fashion.
Such harmless thrusts, as if, like fencers wise,
They had agreed their play before their prize.
Faith, they may hang their harps upon the willows;
'Tis just like children when they box with pillows.

Then put an end to civil wars for shame;
Let each knight-errant, who has wrong'd a dame,
Throw down his pen, and give her, as he can,
The satisfaction of a gentleman.

SPOKEN AT THE ACTING OF "THE SILENT WOMAN."

No poor Dutch peasant, wing'd with all his fear,
Flies with more haste, when the French arms draw near,
Than we with our poetic train come down,
For refuge hither, from the infected town:
Heaven for our sins this summer has thought fit
To visit us with all the plagues of wit.
A French troop first swept all things in its way;
But those hot Monsieurs were too quick to stay:
Yet, to our cost, in that short time, we find
They left their itch of novelty behind.
The Italian merry-andrews took their place,
And quite debauch'd the stage with lewd grimace:
Instead of wit, and humours, your delight
Was there to see two hobby-horses fight;
Stout Scaramoucha with rush lance rode in,
And ran a tilt at centaur Arlequin.
For love you heard how amorous asses bray'd,
And cats in gutters gave their serenade.
Nature was out of countenance, and each day
Some new-born monster shown you for a play.
But when all fail'd, to strike the stage quite dumb,
Those wicked engines call'd machines are come.
Thunder and lightning now for wit are play'd,
And shortly scenes in Lapland will be laid:
Art magic is for poetry profess'd;
And cats and dogs, and each obscener beast,
To which Ægyptian dotards once did bow,
Upon our English stage are worshipp'd now.
Witchcraft reigns there, and raises to renown
Macbeth and Simon Magus of the town;
Fletcher 's despised, your Jonson 's out of fashion,
And wit the only drug in all the nation.

In this low ebb our wares to you are shown;
By you those staple authors' worth is known;
For wit 's a manufacture of your own.
When you, who only can, their scenes have praised,
We 'll boldly back, and say, their price is raised.

SPOKEN AT OXFORD, BY MRS. MARSHALL.

Oft has our poet wish'd, this happy seat
Might prove his fading Muse's last retreat:
I wonder'd at his wish, but now I find
He sought for quiet, and content of mind;
Which noiseful towns, and courts can never know,
And only in the shades like laurels grow.
Youth, ere it sees the world, here studies rest,
And age returning thence concludes it best.
What wonder if we court that happiness
Yearly to share, which hourly you possess.
Teaching e'en you, while the vex'd world we show
Your peace to value more, and better know?
'Tis all we can return for favours past,
Whose holy memory shall ever last,
For patronage from him whose care presides
O'er every noble art, and every science guides:
Bathurst, a name the learn'd with reverence know,
And scarcely more to his own Virgil owe;
Whose age enjoys but what his youth deserved,
To rule those Muses whom before he served.
His learning, and untainted manners too,
We find, Athenians, are derived to you:
Such ancient hospitality there rests
In yours, as dwelt in the first Grecian breasts,
Whose kindness was religion to their guests.
Such modesty did to our sex appear,
As, had there been no laws, we need not fear,
Since each of you was our protector here.
Converse so chaste, and so strict virtue shown,
As might Apollo with the Muses own.
Till our return, we must despair to find
Judges so just, so knowing, and so kind.

TO "ALBION AND ALBANIUS."

After our Æsop's fable shown to-day,
I come to give the moral of the play.
Feign'd Zeal, you saw, set out the speedier pace;
But the last heat, Plain Dealing won the race:
Plain Dealing for a jewel has been known;
But ne'er till now the jewel of a crown.
When Heaven made man, to show the work divine,
Truth was his image, stamp'd upon the coin:
And when a king is to a god refined,
On all he says and does he stamps his mind:
This proves a soul without alloy, and pure;
Kings, like their gold, should every touch endure.
To dare in fields is valour; but how few
Dare be so throughly valiant,—to be true!
The name of great, let other kings affect:
He 's great indeed, the prince that is direct.
His subjects know him now, and trust him more
Than all their kings, and all their laws before.
What safety could their public acts afford?
Those he can break; but cannot break his word.
So great a trust to him alone was due;
Well have they trusted whom so well they knew.
The saint, who walk'd on waves, securely trod,
While he believed the beck'ning of his God;
But when his faith no longer bore him out,
Began to sink, as he began to doubt.
Let us our native character maintain;
'Tis of our growth, to be sincerely plain.
To excel in truth we loyally may strive,
Set privilege against prerogative:
He plights his faith, and we believe him just;
His honour is to promise, ours to trust.
Thus Britain's basis on a word is laid,
As by a word the world itself was made.

TO "HENRY II."

[BY MR. MOUNTFORT, 1693.] SPOKEN BY MRS. BRACEGIRDLE.

THUS you the sad catastrophe have seen,
Occasion'd by a mistress and a queen.
Queen Eleanor the proud was French, they say;
But English manufacture got the day.
Jane Clifford was her name, as books aver:
Fair Rosamond was but her *nom de guerre.*
Now tell me, gallants, would you lead your life
With such a mistress, or with such a wife?
If one must be your choice, which d' ye approve,
The curtain lecture, or the curtain love?
Would ye be godly with perpetual strife,
Still drudging on with homely Joan your wife;
Or take your pleasure in a wicked way,
Like honest whoring Harry in the play?
I guess your minds: the mistress would be taken,
And nauseous matrimony sent a packing.
The devil's in you all; mankind 's a rogue;
You love the bride, but you detest the clog.
After a year, poor spouse is left i' the lurch,
And you, like Haynes, return to mother-Church.
Or, if the name of Church comes cross your mind,
Chapels of ease behind our scenes you find.
The playhouse is a kind of market-place;
One chaffers for a voice, another for a face:
Nay, some of you, I dare not say how many,
Would buy of me a pen'orth for your penny.
E'en this poor face, which with my fan I hide,
Would make a shift my portion to provide,
With some small perquisites I have beside.
Though for your love, perhaps, I should not care,
I could not hate a man that bids me fair.
What might ensue, 'tis hard for me to tell;
But I was drench'd to-day for loving well,
And fear the poison that would make me swell.

AN EPILOGUE.

You saw our wife was chaste, yet throughly tried,
And, without doubt, you're hugely edified;
For, like our hero, whom we show'd to-day,
You think no woman true, but in a play.
Love once did make a pretty kind of show:
Esteem and kindness in one breast would grow:
But 'twas Heaven knows how many years ago.
Now some small chat, and guinea expectation,
Gets all the pretty creatures in the nation:
In comedy your little selves you meet;
'Tis Covent Garden drawn in Brydges-street.
Smile on our author then, if he has shown
A jolly nut-brown bastard of your own.
Ah! happy you, with ease and with delight,
Who act those follies, Poets toil to write!
The sweating Muse does almost leave the chace;
She puffs, and hardly keeps your Protean vices pace.
Pinch you but in one vice, away you fly
To some new frisk of contrariety.
You roll like snow-balls, gathering as you run,
And get seven devils, when dispossess'd of one.
Your Venus once was a Platonic queen;
Nothing of love beside the face was seen;
But every inch of her you now uncase,
And clap a vizard-mask upon the face.
For sins like these, the zealous of the land,
With little hair, and little or no band,
Declare how circulating pestilences
Watch, every twenty years, to snap offences.
Saturn, e'en now, takes doctoral degrees;
He 'll do your work this summer without fees.
Let all the boxes, Phœbus, find thy grace,
And, ah, preserve the eighteen-penny place!
But for the pit confounders, let 'em go,
And find as little mercy as they show:
The Actors thus, and thus thy Poets pray:
For every critic saved, thou damn'st a play.

TO "THE HUSBAND HIS OWN CUCKOLD."

LIKE some raw sophister that mounts the pulpit,
So trembles a young Poet at a full pit.
Unused to crowds, the Parson quakes for fear,
And wonders how the devil he durst come there;
Wanting three talents needful for the place,
Some beard, some learning, and some little grace:
Nor is the puny Poet void of care;
For authors, such as our new authors are,
Have not much learning, nor much wit to spare:
And as for grace, to tell the truth, there's scarce one,
But has as little as the very Parson:
Both say, they preach and write for your instruction:
But 'tis for a third day, and for induction.
The difference is, that though you like the play,
The poet's gain is ne'er beyond his day.
But with the Parson 'tis another case,
He, without holiness, may rise to grace;
The Poet has one disadvantage more,
That, if his play be dull, he's damn'd all o'er,
Not only a damn'd blockhead, but damn'd poor.
But dulness well becomes the sable garment;
I warrant that ne'er spoil'd a Priest's preferment:
Wit's not his business, and as wit now goes,
Sirs, 'tis not so much yours as you suppose,
For you like nothing now but nauseous beaux.
You laugh not, gallants, as by proof appears,
At what his beauship says, but what he wears;
So 'tis your eyes are tickled, not your ears:
The tailor and the furrier find the stuff,
The wit lies in the dress, and monstrous muff.
The truth on't is, the payment of the pit
Is like for like, clipt money for clipt wit.
You cannot from our absent author hope,
He should equip the stage with such a fop:
Fools change in England, and new fools arise,
For though the immortal species never dies,
Yet every year new maggots make new flies.
But where he lives abroad, he scarce can find
One fool, for million that he left behind.

TO "THE PILGRIM."

PERHAPS the parson stretch'd a point too far,
When with our Theatres he waged a war.
He tells you, that this very moral age
Received the first infection from the Stage.
But sure, a banish'd court, with lewdness fraught,
The seeds of open vice, returning, brought.
Thus lodged (as vice by great example thrives)
It first debauch'd the daughters and the wives.
London, a fruitful soil, yet never bore
So plentiful a crop of horns before.
The Poets, who must live by courts, or starve,
Were proud so good a government to serve;
And, mixing with buffoons and pimps profane,
Tainted the Stage, for some small snip of gain.
For they, like harlots, under bawds profess'd,
Took all the ungodly pains, and got the least.
Thus did the thriving malady prevail,
The court, its head, the Poets but the tail.
The sin was in our native growth, 'tis true;
The scandal of the sin was wholly new.
Misses they were, but modestly conceal'd;
Whitehall the naked Venus first reveal'd.
Who standing as at Cyprus, in her shrine,
The strumpet was adored with rites divine.
Ere this, if saints had any secret motion,
'Twas chamber-practice all, and close devotion.
I pass the peccadillos of their time;
Nothing but open lewdness was a crime.
A monarch's blood was venial to the nation,
Compared with one foul act of fornication.
Now, they would silence us, and shut the door
That let in all the barefaced vice before.
As for reforming us, which some pretend,
That work in England is without an end:
Well may we change, but we shall never mend.
Yet, if you can but bear the present Stage,
We hope much better of the coming age.
What would you say, if we should first begin
To stop the trade of love behind the scene:
Where actresses make bold with married men?

For while abroad so prodigal the dolt is,
Poor spouse at home as ragged as a colt is.
In short, we'll grow as moral as we can,
Save here and there a woman or a man:
But neither you, nor we, with all our pains,
Can make clean work; there will be some remains,
While you have still your Oates, and we our Hains.

ODES, SONGS,

&c.

ALEXANDER'S FEAST; OR, THE POWER OF MUSIC:

AN ODE IN HONOUR OF ST. CECILIA'S DAY.

'Twas at the royal feast, for Persia won
By Philip's warlike son:
Aloft in awful state
The god-like hero sate
On his imperial throne:
His valiant peers were placed around,
Their brows with roses and with myrtles bound;
(So should desert in arms be crown'd.)
The lovely Thais, by his side,
Sate like a blooming Eastern bride
In flower of youth and beauty's pride.
Happy, happy, happy pair!
None but the brave,
None but the brave,
None but the brave deserves the fair.

CHORUS.

Happy, happy, happy pair!
None but the brave,
None but the brave,
None but the brave deserves the fair.

Timotheus, placed on high
Amid the tuneful choir,
With flying fingers touch'd the lyre:
The trembling notes ascend the sky,
And heavenly joys inspire.
The song began from Jove,
Who left his blissful seats above,
(Such is the power of mighty love.)
A dragon's fiery form belied the god:
Sublime on radiant spires he rode,
When he to fair Olympia press'd:
And while he sought her snowy breast:
Then round her slender waist he curl'd,
And stamp'd an image of himself, a sovereign of the world.
The listening crowd admire the lofty sound,
A present deity! they shout around:
A present deity! the vaulted roofs rebound.
With ravish'd ears
The monarch hears,
Assumes the god,
Affects to nod,
And seems to shake the spheres.

CHORUS.

With ravish'd ears
The monarch hears,
Assumes the god,
Affects to nod,
And seems to shake the spheres.

The praise of Bacchus then the sweet musician sung,
Of Bacchus—ever fair and ever young:
The jolly god in triumph comes;
Sound the trumpets; beat the drums:
Flush'd with a purple grace
Now he shows his honest face:
Now give the hautboys breath. He comes! he comes!
Bacchus, ever fair and young,
Drinking joys did first ordain;
Bacchus' blessings are a treasure,
Drinking is the soldier's pleasure:
Rich the treasure,
Sweet the pleasure,
Sweet is pleasure after pain.

CHORUS.

Bacchus' blessings are a treasure,
Drinking is the soldier's pleasure:
Rich the treasure,
Sweet the pleasure,
Sweet is pleasure after pain.

Soothed with the sound the king grew vain;
Fought all his battles o'er again;
And thrice he routed all his foes; and thrice he slew the slain.
The master saw the madness rise;
His glowing cheeks, his ardent eyes;
And, while he heaven and earth defied,
Changed his hand, and check'd his pride.
He chose a mournful muse
Soft pity to infuse:
He sung Darius, great and good;
By too severe a fate,
Fallen, fallen, fallen, fallen,
Fallen from his high estate,
And welt'ring in his blood;
Deserted, at his utmost need,
By those his former bounty fed;
On the bare earth exposed he lies,
With not a friend to close his eyes.
With downcast looks the joyless victor sate,
Revolving in his alter'd soul
The various turns of chance below;
And, now and then, a sigh he stole;
And tears began to flow.

CHORUS.

Revolving in his alter'd soul
The various turns of chance below;
And, now and then, a sigh he stole;
And tears began to flow.

The mighty master smiled, to see
That love was in the next degree;
'Twas but a kindred-sound to move,
For pity melts the mind to love.
Softly sweet, in Lydian measures,
Soon he soothed his soul to pleasures.

War, he sung, is toil and trouble;
Honour, but an empty bubble;
Never ending, still beginning,
Fighting still, and still destroying:
If the world be worth thy winning,
Think, oh think it worth enjoying:
Lovely Thais sits beside thee,
Take the good the gods provide thee.
The many rend the skies with loud applause;
So Love was crown'd, but Music won the cause.
The prince, unable to conceal his pain,
Gazed on the fair
Who caused his care,
And sigh'd and look'd, sigh'd and look'd,
Sigh'd and look'd, and sigh'd again:
At length, with love and wine at once oppress'd,
The vanquish'd victor sunk upon her breast.

CHORUS.

The prince, unable to conceal his pain,
Gazed on the fair
Who caused his care,
And sigh'd and look'd, sigh'd and look'd,
Sigh'd and look'd, and sigh'd again:
At length with love and wine at once oppress'd,
The vanquish'd victor sunk upon her breast.

Now strike the golden lyre again:
A louder yet, and yet a louder strain.
Break his bands of sleep asunder,
And rouse him, like a rattling peal of thunder.
Hark, hark, the horrid sound
Has raised up his head:
As awaked from the dead,
And amazed, he stares around.
Revenge! revenge! Timotheus cries,
See the furies arise!
See the snakes that they rear,
How they hiss in their hair!
And the sparkles that flash from their eyes!
Behold a ghastly band,
Each a torch in his hand!
Those are Grecian ghosts, that in battle were slain,
And unburied remain,
Inglorious on the plain:

Give the vengeance due
To the valiant crew.
Behold how they toss their torches on high,
How they point to the Persian abodes,
And glittering temples of their hostile gods.
The princes applaud with a furious joy;
And the king seized a flambeau with zeal to destroy;
Thais led the way,
To light him to his prey,
And, like another Helen, fired another Troy!

CHORUS.

And the king seized a flambeau with zeal to destroy;
Thais led the way,
To light him to his prey,
And, like another Helen, fired another Troy!

Thus long ago,
Ere heaving bellows learn'd to blow,
While organs yet were mute;
Timotheus, to his breathing flute,
And sounding lyre,
Could swell the soul to rage, or kindle soft desire.
At last divine Cecilia came,
Inventress of the vocal frame;
The sweet enthusiast, from her sacred store,
Enlarged the former narrow bounds,
And added length to solemn sounds,
With nature's mother-wit, and arts unknown before.
Let old Timotheus yield the prize,
Or both divide the crown;
He raised a mortal to the skies;
She drew an angel down.

GRAND CHORUS.

At last divine Cecilia came,
Inventress of the vocal frame;
The sweet enthusiast, from her sacred store,
Enlarged the former narrow bounds,
And added length to solemn sounds,
With nature's mother-wit, and arts unknown before.
Let old Timotheus yield the prize,
Or both divide the crown;
He raised a mortal to the skies,
She drew an angel down.

ALEXANDER'S FEAST.

"And the king seized a flambeau, with zeal to destroy" P. 502

A SONG FOR ST. CECILIA'S DAY, 1687.

From harmony, from heavenly harmony,
This universal frame began:
When nature underneath a heap
Of jarring atoms lay,
And could not heave her head,
The tuneful voice was heard from high,
Arise, ye more than dead.
Then cold, and hot, and moist, and dry,
In order to their stations leap,
And Music's power obey.
From harmony, from heavenly harmony
This universal frame began:
From harmony to harmony,
Through all the compass of the notes it ran,
The diapason closing full in Man.

What passion cannot Music raise and quell?
When Jubal struck the chorded shell,
His listening brethren stood around,
And, wondering, on their faces fell
To worship that celestial sound.
Less than a God they thought there could not dwell
Within the hollow of that shell,
That spoke so sweetly and so well.
What passion cannot Music raise and quell?

The trumpet's loud clangor
Excites us to arms,
With shrill notes of anger,
And mortal alarms.
The double double double beat
Of the thundering drum
Cries, hark! the foes come;
Charge, charge, 'tis too late to retreat.

The soft complaining flute
In dying notes discovers
The woes of hopeless lovers,
Whose dirge is whisper'd by the warbling lute.

Sharp violins proclaim
Their jealous pangs, and desperation,
Fury, frantic indignation,
Depth of pains, and height of passion,
For the fair, disdainful, dame.

But oh! what art can teach,
What human voice can reach,
The sacred organ's praise?
Notes inspiring holy love,
Notes that wing their heavenly ways
To mend the choirs above.

Orpheus could lead the savage race;
And trees uprooted left their place,
Sequacious of the lyre:
But bright Cecilia raised the wonder higher:
When to her organ vocal breath was given,
An angel heard, and straight appear'd
Mistaking earth for heaven.

GRAND CHORUS.

As from the power of sacred lays
The spheres began to move,
And sung the great Creator's praise
To all the bless'd above;
So when the last and dreadful hour
This crumbling pageant shall devour,
The trumpet shall be heard on high,
The dead shall live, the living die,
And Music shall untune the sky.

THE FAIR STRANGER:

ADDRESSED TO LOUISA QUEROUAILLE, AFTERWARDS DUCHESS OF PORTSMOUTH.

A SONG.

HAPPY and free, securely blest,
No beauty could disturb my rest;
My amorous heart was in despair,
To find a new victorious fair:
Till you descending on our plains,
With foreign force renew my chains;
Where now you rule without control
The mighty sovereign of my soul.
Your smiles have more of conquering charms,
Than all your native country arms:
Their troops we can expel with ease,
Who vanquish only when we please.

But in your eyes, oh! there's the spell,
Who can see them, and not rebel?
You make us captives by your stay,
Yet kill us if you go away.

ON THE YOUNG STATESMEN.

CLARENDON had law and sense,
Clifford was fierce and brave;
Bennet's grave look was a pretence,
And Danby's matchless impudence
Help'd to support the knave.

But Sunderland, Godolphin, Lory,
These will appear such chits in story,
'Twill turn all politics to jests,
To be repeated like John Dory,
When fiddlers sing at feasts.

Protect us, mighty Providence,
What would these madmen have?
First, they would bribe us without pence,
Deceive us without common sense,
And without power enslave.

Shall free-born men, in humble awe,
Submit to servile shame;
Who from consent and custom draw
The same right to be ruled by law,
Which kings pretend to reign?

The duke shall wield his conquering sword,
The chancellor make a speech,
The king shall pass his honest word,
The pawn'd revenue sums afford,
And then, come kiss my breech.

So have I seen a king on chess
(His rooks and knights withdrawn,
His queen and bishops in distress)
Shifting about, grow less and less,
With here and there a pawn.

FAREWELL, fair Armida, my joy and my grief,
In vain I have loved you, and hope no relief;
Undone by our virtue, too strict and severe,
Your eyes gave me love, and you gave me despair:
Now call'd by my honour, I seek with content
The fate which in pity you would not prevent:
To languish in love, were to find by delay
A death that 's more welcome the speediest way.

On seas and in battles, in bullets and fire,
The danger is less than in hopeless desire;
My death's wound you give, though far off I bear
My fall from your sight—not to cost you a tear:
But if the kind flood on a wave should convey
And under your window my body should lay,
The wound on my breast when you happen to see,
You'll say with a sigh—it was given by me.

A CHOIR of bright beauties in spring did appear,
To choose a May-lady to govern the year;
All the nymphs were in white, and the shepherds in green;
The garland was given, and Phillis was queen:
But Phillis refused it, and sighing did say,
I 'll not wear a garland while Pan is away.

While Pan and fair Syrinx are fled from our shore,
The Graces are banish'd, and Love is no more:
The soft god of pleasure, that warm'd our desires,
Has broken his bow, and extinguish'd his fires:
And vows that himself, and his mother, will mourn,
'Till Pan and fair Syrinx in triumph return.

Forbear your addresses, and court us no more,
For we will perform what the deity swore:
But if you dare think of deserving our charms,
Away with your sheephooks, and take to your arms:
Then laurels and myrtles your brows shall adorn,
When Pan, and his son, and fair Syrinx, return.

Fair, sweet, and young, receive a prize
Reserved for your victorious eyes:
From crowds, whom at your feet you see,
Oh pity, and distinguish me!
As I from thousand beauties more
Distinguish you, and only you adore.

Your face for conquest was design'd,
Your every motion charms my mind;
Angels, when you your silence break,
Forget their hymns, to hear you speak;
But when at once they hear and view,
Are loth to mount, and long to stay with you.

No graces can your form improve,
But all are lost, unless you love;
While that sweet passion you disdain,
Your veil and beauty are in vain:
In pity then prevent my fate,
For after dying all reprieve 's too late.

High state and honours to others impart,
But give me your heart:
That treasure, that treasure alone,
I beg for my own.
So gentle a love, so fervent a fire,
My soul does inspire;
That treasure, that treasure alone,
I beg for my own.
Your love let me crave;
Give me in possessing
So matchless a blessing;
That empire is all I would have.
Love 's my petition,
All my ambition;
If e'er you discover
So faithful a lover,
So real a flame,
I 'll die, I 'll die,
So give up my game.

Go tell Amynta, gentle swain,
I would not die, nor dare complain:
Thy tuneful voice with numbers join,
Thy words will more prevail than mine,
To souls oppress'd, and dumb with grief,
The gods ordain this kind relief;
That music should in sounds convey,
What dying lovers dare not say.

A sigh or tear, perhaps, she 'll give,
But love on pity cannot live.
Tell her that hearts for hearts were made,
And love with love is only paid.
Tell her my pains so fast increase,
That soon they will be past redress;
But ah! the wretch, that speechless lies,
Attends but death to close his eyes.

TO A FAIR YOUNG LADY,

GOING OUT OF THE TOWN IN THE SPRING.

Ask not the cause, why sullen Spring
So long delays her flowers to bear;
Why warbling birds forget to sing,
And winter-storms invert the year:
Chloris is gone, and fate provides
To make it Spring, where she resides.

Chloris is gone, the cruel fair;
She cast not back a pitying eye:
But left her lover in despair,
To sigh, to languish, and to die:
Ah, how can those fair eyes endure
To give the wounds they will not cure!

Great god of love, why hast thou made
A face that can all hearts command,
That all religions can invade,
And change the laws of every land?
Where thou hadst placed such power before,
Thou shouldst have made her mercy more.

When Chloris to the temple comes,
Adoring crowds before her fall;
She can restore the dead from tombs,
And every life but mine recal.
I only am by Love design'd
To be the victim for mankind.

VENI CREATOR SPIRITUS,

PARAPHRASED.

CREATOR Spirit, by whose aid
The world's foundations first were laid,
Come visit every pious mind;
Come pour thy joys on human kind;
From sin and sorrow set us free,
And make thy temples worthy thee.
O source of uncreated light,
The Father's promised Paraclete!
Thrice holy fount, thrice holy fire,
Our hearts with heavenly love inspire;
Come, and thy sacred unction bring
To sanctify us, while we sing.
Plenteous of grace, descend from high,
Rich in thy seven-fold energy!
Thou strength of his Almighty hand,
Whose power does heaven and earth command.
Proceeding Spirit, our defence,
Who dost the gifts of tongues dispense,
And crown'st thy gift with eloquence!
Refine and purge our earthly parts;
But, oh, inflame and fire our hearts!
Our frailties help, our vice control,
Submit the senses to the soul;
And when rebellious they are grown,
Then lay thy hand, and hold 'em down.
Chase from our minds the infernal foe,
And peace, the fruit of love, bestow;
And lest our feet should step astray,
Protect and guide us in the way.
Make us eternal truths receive,
And practise all that we believe:

Give us thyself, that we may see
The Father, and the Son, by thee.
Immortal honour, endless fame,
Attend the Almighty Father's name:
The Saviour Son be glorified,
Who for lost man's redemption died:
And equal adoration be,
Eternal Paraclete, to thee.

THE SECULAR MASQUE.

Enter JANUS.

JANUS.

CHRONOS, Chronos, mend thy pace,
An hundred times the rolling sun
Around the radiant belt has run
In his revolving race.
Behold, behold, the goal in sight,
Spread thy fans, and wing thy flight.

Enter CHRONOS, *with a scythe in his hand, and a globe on his back, which he sets down at his entrance.*

CHRONOS.

Weary, weary of my weight,
Let me, let me drop my freight,
And leave the world behind.
I could not bear,
Another year,
The load of human-kind.

Enter MOMUS *laughing.*

MOMUS.

Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! well hast thou done
To lay down thy pack,
And lighten thy back,
The world was a fool, e'er since it begun,
And since neither Janus, nor Chronos, nor I,
Can hinder the crimes,
Or mend the bad times,
'Tis better to laugh than to cry.

CHORUS OF ALL THREE.

'Tis better to laugh than to cry.

THE SECULAR MASQUE.

"With horns and with hounds I waken the day:
And hie to the woodland-walks away."

P. 511

JANUS.

Since Momus comes to laugh below,
Old Time begin the show,
That he may see, in every scene,
What changes in this age have been.

CHRONOS.

Then goddess of the silver bow begin.

[Horns, or hunting-music within.]

Enter DIANA.

DIANA.

With horns and with hounds, I waken the day;
And hie to the woodland-walks away:
I tuck up my robe, and am buskin'd soon,
And place on my forehead a waxing moon.
I course the fleet stag, unkennel the fox,
And chase the wild goats o'er summits of rocks,
With shouting and hooting we pierce through the sky,
And Echo turns hunter, and doubles the cry.

CHORUS OF ALL.

With shouting and hooting we pierce through the sky,
And Echo turns hunter and doubles the cry.

JANUS.

Then our age was in its prime:

CHRONOS.

Free from rage:

DIANA.

——— And free from crime:

MOMUS.

A very merry, dancing, drinking,
Laughing, quaffing, and unthinking time.

CHORUS OF ALL.

Then our age was in its prime,
Free from rage and free from crime,
A very merry, dancing, drinking,
Laughing, quaffing, and unthinking time.

[Dance of DIANA'S *attendants.]*

Enter MARS.

MARS.

Inspire the vocal brass, inspire;
The world is past its infant age:

Arms and honour,
Arms and honour,
Set the martial mind on fire,
And kindle manly rage.
Mars has look'd the sky to red;
And Peace, the lazy good, is fled.
Plenty, peace, and pleasure fly;
The sprightly green,
In woodland-walks no more is seen;
The sprightly green has drunk the Tyrian dye.

CHORUS OF ALL.

Plenty, peace, &c.

MARS.

Sound the trumpet, beat the drum;
Through all the world around,
Sound a reveillé, sound, sound,
The warrior god is come.

CHORUS OF ALL.

Sound the trumpet, &c.

MOMUS.

Thy sword within the scabbard keep,
And let mankind agree;
Better the world were fast asleep,
Than kept awake by thee.
The fools are only thinner,
With all our cost and care;
But neither side a winner,
For things are as they were.

CHORUS OF ALL.

The fools are only, &c.

Enter VENUS.

VENUS.

Calms appear, when storms are past;
Love will have his hour at last:
Nature is my kindly care;
Mars destroys, and I repair;
Take me, take me, while you may,
Venus comes not every day.

CHORUS OF ALL.

Take her, take her, &c.

CHRONOS.

The world was then so light,
I scarcely felt the weight;
Joy ruled the day, and Love the night.
But, since the queen of pleasure left the ground,
I faint, I lag,
And feebly drag
The ponderous orb around.

MOMUS.

All, all of a piece throughout:
Thy chace had a beast in view;
[Pointing to Diana.
Thy wars brought nothing about; *[To Mars.*
Thy lovers were all untrue. *[To Venus.*

JANUS.

'Tis well an old age is out.

CHRONOS.

And time to begin a new.

CHORUS OF ALL.

All, all of a piece throughout:
Thy chace had a beast in view;
Thy wars brought nothing about;
Thy lovers were all untrue.
'Tis well an old age is out,
And time to begin a new.

Dance of huntsmen, nymphs, warriors, and lovers.

OF A SCHOLAR AND HIS MISTRESS,

WHO BEING CROSSED BY THEIR FRIENDS, FELL MAD FOR ONE ANOTHER; AND NOW FIRST MEET IN BEDLAM.

[Music within.]

The Lovers enter at opposite doors, each held by a Keeper.

PHILLIS.

Look, look, I see—I see my love appear!
'Tis he——'Tis he alone;
For, like him, there is none:
'Tis the dear, dear man, 'tis thee, dear.

AMYNTAS.

Hark! the winds war;
The foamy waves roar;
I see a ship afar,
Tossing and tossing, and making to the shore:
But what's that I view,
So radiant of hue,
St. Hermo, St. Hermo, that sits upon the sails?
Ah! No, no, no.
St. Hermo, never, never shone so bright;
'Tis Phillis, only Phillis, can shoot so fair a light;
'Tis Phillis, 'tis Phillis, that saves the ship alone,
For all the winds are hush'd, and the storm is overblown.

PHILLIS.

Let me go, let me run, let me fly to his arms.

AMYNTAS.

If all the fates combine,
And all the furies join,
I'll force my way to Phillis, and break through the charm.

[Here they break from their keepers, run to each other, and embrace.]

PHILLIS.

Shall I marry the man I love?
And shall I conclude my pains?
Now bless'd be the Powers above,
I feel the blood bound in my veins;
With a lively leap it began to move,
And the vapours leave my brains.

AMYNTAS.

Body join'd to body, and heart join'd to heart,
To make sure of the cure,
Go call the man in black, to mumble o'er his part.

PHILLIS.

But suppose he should stay———

AMYNTAS.

At worst if he delay,
'Tis a work must be done,
We'll borrow but a day,
And the better, the sooner begun.

CHORUS OF BOTH.

At worst if he delay, &c.

[They run out together hand in hand.]

IN "THE INDIAN EMPEROR."

An fading joy! how quickly art thou past!
Yet we thy ruin haste.
As if the cares of human life were few,
We seek out new:
And follow fate, which would too fast pursue.
See, how on every bough the birds express,
In their sweet notes, their happiness.
They all enjoy, and nothing spare;
But on their mother Nature lay their care:
Why then should man, the lord of all below,
Such troubles choose to know,
As none of all his subjects undergo?

Hark, hark, the waters fall, fall, fall,
And with a murmuring sound
Dash, dash, upon the ground,
To gentle slumbers call.

IN "THE INDIAN EMPEROR."

I look'd and saw within the book of fate,
When many days did lour,
When lo! one happy hour
Leap'd up, and smiled to save the sinking state;
A day shall come when in thy power
Thy cruel foes shall be;
Then shall thy land be free:
And then in peace shall reign;
But take, oh take that opportunity,
Which once refused will never come again.

IN "THE MAIDEN QUEEN."

I feed a flame within, which so torments me,
That it both pains my heart, and yet contents me:
'Tis such a pleasing smart, and I so love it,
That I had rather die, than once remove it.
Yet he, for whom I grieve, shall never know it;
My tongue does not betray, nor my eyes show it.

Not a sigh, nor a tear, my pain discloses,
But they fall silently, like dew on roses.
Thus, to prevent my love from being cruel,
My heart 's the sacrifice, as 'tis the fuel:
And while I suffer this to give him quiet,
My faith rewards my love, though he deny it.
On his eyes will I gaze, and there delight me;
Where I conceal my love no frown can fright me:
To be more happy, I dare not aspire;
Nor can I fall more low, mounting no higher.

IN THE FIRST PART OF "THE CONQUEST OF GRANADA."

WHEREVER I am, and whatever I do,
My Phillis is still in my mind;
When angry, I mean not to Phillis to go,
My feet, of themselves, the way find:
Unknown to myself I am just at her door,
And, when I would rail, I can bring out no more,
Than, Phillis, too fair and unkind!

When Phillis I see, my heart bounds in my breast,
And the love I would stifle is shown;
But asleep, or awake, I am never at rest,
When from my eyes Phillis is gone.
Sometimes a sad dream does delude my sad mind;
But, alas! when I wake, and no Phillis I find,
How I sigh to myself all alone!

Should a king be my rival in her I adore,
He should offer his treasure in vain:
Oh, let me alone to be happy and poor,
And give me my Phillis again!
Let Phillis be mine, and but ever be kind,
I could to a desert with her be confined,
And envy no monarch his reign.

Alas! I discover too much of my love,
And she too well knows her own power!
She makes me each day a new martyrdom prove,
And makes me grow jealous each hour:
But let her each minute torment my poor mind,
I had rather love Phillis, both false and unkind,
Than ever be freed from her power.

IN THE SECOND PART OF "THE CONQUEST OF GRANADA."

He. How unhappy a lover am I,
While I sigh for my Phillis in vain;
All my hopes of delight
Are another man's right,
Who is happy, while I am in pain!

She. Since her honour allows no relief,
But to pity the pains which you bear,
'Tis the best of your fate,
In a hopeless estate,
To give o'er, and betimes to despair.

He. I have tried the false med'cine in vain;
For I wish what I hope not to win:
From without, my desire
Has no food to its fire;
But it burns and consumes me within.

She. Yet, at least, 'tis a pleasure to know
That you are not unhappy alone:
For the nymph you adore
Is as wretched, and more;
And counts all your sufferings her own.

He. O ye gods, let me suffer for both;
At the feet of my Phillis I'll lie:
I'll resign up my breath,
And take pleasure in death,
To be pitied by her when I die.

She. What her honour denied you in life,
In her death she will give to your love;
Such a flame as is true
After fate will renew,
For the souls to meet closer above.

THE SEA-FIGHT, IN "AMBOYNA."

WHO ever saw a noble sight,
That never view'd a brave sea-fight!
Hang up your bloody colours in the air,
Up with your fights, and your nettings prepare;

Your merry mates cheer, with a lusty bold spright,
Now each man his brindice, and then to the fight.
St. George, St. George, we cry;
The shouting Turks reply.
Oh now it begins, and the gun-room grows hot,
Ply it with culverin and with small shot;
Hark, does it not thunder? no, 'tis the guns roar,
The neighbouring billows are turn'd into gore;
Now each man must resolve to die,
For here the coward cannot fly.
Drums and trumpets toll the knell,
And culverins the passing bell.
Now, now they grapple, and now board amain;
Blow up the hatches, they're off all again:
Give them a broadside, the dice run at all,
Down comes the mast and yard, and tacklings fall;
She grows giddy now, like blind Fortune's wheel,
She sinks there, she sinks, she turns up her keel.
Who ever beheld so noble a sight,
As this so brave, so bloody sea-fight!

INCANTATION IN ŒDIPUS.

Tir. CHOOSE the darkest part o' the grove,
Such as ghosts at noon-day love.
Dig a trench, and dig it nigh
Where the bones of Laius lie;
Altars raised of turf or stone,
Will th' infernal pow'rs have none;
Answer me, if this be done?
All Pr. 'Tis done.
Tir. Is the sacrifice made fit?
Draw her backward to the pit:
Draw the barren heifer back;
Barren let her be, and black.
Cut the curled hair that grows
Full betwixt her horns and brows:
And turn your faces from the sun;
Answer me, if this be done?
All Pr. 'Tis done.
Tir. Pour in blood, and blood-like wine,
To Mother Earth and Proserpine:

Mingle milk into the stream;
Feast the ghosts, that love the steam:
Snatch a brand, from funeral pile:
Toss it in, to make them boil:
And turn your faces from the sun;
Answer me, if this be done?
All Pr. 'Tis done.

IN "ALBION AND ALBANIUS."

CEASE, Augusta! cease thy mourning,
Happy days appear,
God-like Albion is returning,
Loyal hearts to cheer!
Every grace his youth adorning,
Glorious as the star of morning,
Or the planet of the year.

IN "ALBION AND ALBANIUS."

ALBION, by the nymph attended,
Was to Neptune recommended,
Peace and plenty spread the sails;
Venus, in her shell before him,
From the sands in safety bore him,
And supplied Etesian gales.
Archon, on the shore commanding,
Lowly met him at his landing,
Crowds of people swarm'd around;
Welcome, rang like peals of thunder,
Welcome, rent the skies asunder,
Welcome, heaven and earth resound.

IN "ALBION AND ALBANIUS."

INFERNAL offspring of the Night,
Debarr'd of heaven your native right,
And from the glorious fields of light,
Condemn'd in shades to drag the chain,
And fill with groans the gloomy plain;

Since pleasures here are none below,
Be ill our good, our joy be woe:
Our work t' embroil the worlds above,
Disturb their union, disunite their love,
And blast the beauteous frame of our victorious foe.

IN "ALBION AND ALBANIUS."

See the god of seas attends thee,
Nymphs divine, a beauteous train;
All the calmer gales befriend thee
In thy passage o'er the main:
Every maid her locks is binding,
Every Triton's horn is winding,
Welcome to the watery plain.

IN "ALBION AND ALBANIUS."

Albion, loved of gods and men,
Prince of Peace too mildly reigning,
Cease thy sorrow and complaining,
Thou shalt be restored again:
Albion, loved of gods and men.

Still thou art the care of heaven,
In thy youth to exile driven:
Heaven thy ruin then prevented,
Till the guilty land repented:
In thy age, when none could aid thee,
Foes conspired, and friends betray'd thee.
To the brink of danger driven,
Still thou art the care of Heaven.

IN "KING ARTHUR."

Where a battle is supposed to be given behind the scenes, with drums, trumpets, and military shouts and excursions: after which the Britons, expressing their joy for the victory, sing this song of triumph.

(SET BY PURCELL.)

COME, if you dare, our trumpets sound;
Come, if you dare, the foes rebound:
We come, we come, we come, we come,
Says the double, double, double beat of the thundering drum.

Now they charge on amain,
Now they rally again:
The gods from above the mad labour behold,
And pity mankind, that will perish for gold.

The fainting Saxons quit their ground,
Their trumpets languish in the sound:
They fly, they fly, they fly, they fly;
Victoria! Victoria! the bold Britons cry.

Now the victory's won,
To the plunder we run:
We return to our lasses like fortunate traders,
Triumphant with spoils of the vanquish'd invaders.

IN "KING ARTHUR."

Man sings. OH sight, the mother of desires,
What charming objects dost thou yield!
'Tis sweet, when tedious night expires,
To see the rosy morning gild
The mountain-tops, and paint the field!
But when Clarinda comes in sight,
She makes the summer's day more bright;
And when she goes away, 'tis night.

Chor. When fair Clarinda comes in sight, &c.

Wom. sings. 'Tis sweet the blushing morn to view;
And plains adorn'd with pearly dew:
But such cheap delights to see,
Heaven and nature
Give each creature;
They have eyes, as well as we:
This is the joy, all joys above,
To see, to see,
That only she,
That only she we love!

Chor. This is the joy, all joys above, &c.

IN "KING ARTHUR."

Two daughters of this aged stream are we;
And both our sea-green locks have comb'd for thee;
Come bathe with us an hour or two,
Come naked in, for we are so:
What danger from a naked foe?
Come bathe with us, come bathe and share
What pleasures in the floods appear;
We 'll beat the waters till they bound,
And circle round, around, around,
And circle round, around.

IN "KING ARTHUR." TO BRITANNIA.

I.

Ye blustering brethren of the skies,
Whose breath has ruffled all the watery plain,
Retire, and let Britannia rise,
In triumph o'er the main.
Serene and calm, and void of fear,
The Queen of Islands must appear:
Serene and calm, as when the Spring
The new-created world began,
And birds on boughs did softly sing
Their peaceful homage paid to man;

While Eurus did his blasts forbear,
In favour of the tender year.
Retreat, rude winds, retreat
To hollow rocks, your stormy seat;
There swell your lungs, and vainly, vainly threat.

II.

For folded flocks, on fruitful plains,
The shepherd's and the farmer's gains,
Fair Britain all the world outvies;
And Pan, as in Arcadia, reigns,
Where pleasure mixed with profit lies.

Though Jason's fleece was famed of old,
The British wool is growing gold;
No mines can more of wealth supply;
It keeps the peasant from the cold,
And takes for kings the Tyrian dye.

III.

(SET BY PURCELL.)

Fairest isle, all isles excelling,
Seat of pleasures and of loves:
Venus here will choose her dwelling,
And forsake her Cyprian groves.

Cupid from his favourite nation,
Care and envy will remove;
Jealousy, that poisons passion,
And despair, that dies for love.

Gentle murmurs, sweet complaining,
Sighs, that blow the fire of love;
Soft repulses, kind disdaining,
Shall be all the pains you prove.

Every swain shall pay his duty,
Grateful every nymph shall prove;
And as these excel in beauty,
Those shall be renown'd for love.

IN "LOVE TRIUMPHANT."

WHAT state of life can be so blest
As love, that warms a lover's breast?
Two souls in one, the same desire
To grant the bliss, and to require!
But if in heaven a hell we find,
'Tis all from thee,
O Jealousy!
'Tis all from thee,
O Jealousy!
Thou tyrant, tyrant Jealousy,
Thou tyrant of the mind!

All other ills, though sharp they prove,
Serve to refine, and perfect love:
In absence, or unkind disdain,
Sweet hope relieves the lover's pain.
But, ah! no cure but death we find,
To set us free
From Jealousy:
O Jealousy!
Thou tyrant, tyrant Jealousy,
Thou tyrant of the mind!

False in thy glass all objects are,
Some set too near, and some too far;
Thou art the fire of endless night,
The fire that burns, and gives no light.
All torments of the damn'd we find
In only thee,
O Jealousy!
Thou tyrant, tyrant Jealousy,
Thou tyrant of the mind!

THE END.

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